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**The Child Poverty Action Group 1965-1974:
The Origins and Effectiveness of a
Single Issue Pressure Group**

Maria Lesley Meyer-Kelly

Abstract of Study

This study raises two key questions about the Child Poverty Action Group between 1965 and 1974. Firstly, it seeks to offer an explanation as to why the Child Poverty Action Group was formed at this time. Secondly, it draws on the empirical evidence set out in this study to ascertain how effective CPAG was as a group during the period; both at drawing attention to the problem of family poverty and at persuading the government of the practicalities of its solution. In answering both these questions the study uses the framework of the theoretical literature. This theoretical framework is used to structure and interrogate the empirical evidence, which is drawn from archival, interview and published sources.

The study argues that the origins of the Child Poverty Action Group can be attributed to a number of factors converging at this time and that the rediscovery of poverty acted as a catalyst for the formation of the group.

The study concludes that the Child Poverty Action Group was effective as a catalyst, which forced the government to take action about the problem of family poverty. The group was not consistently successful in persuading the government of that its solution was the optimal solution but gradually the solution became mainstream. It argues that the Child Poverty Action Group played an important role.

The study aims to be both a detailed historical examination of the Child Poverty Action Group, as an organisation and a case study of an influential pressure group of the period. Thus it furthers knowledge of academic disciplines of History and Social Policy.

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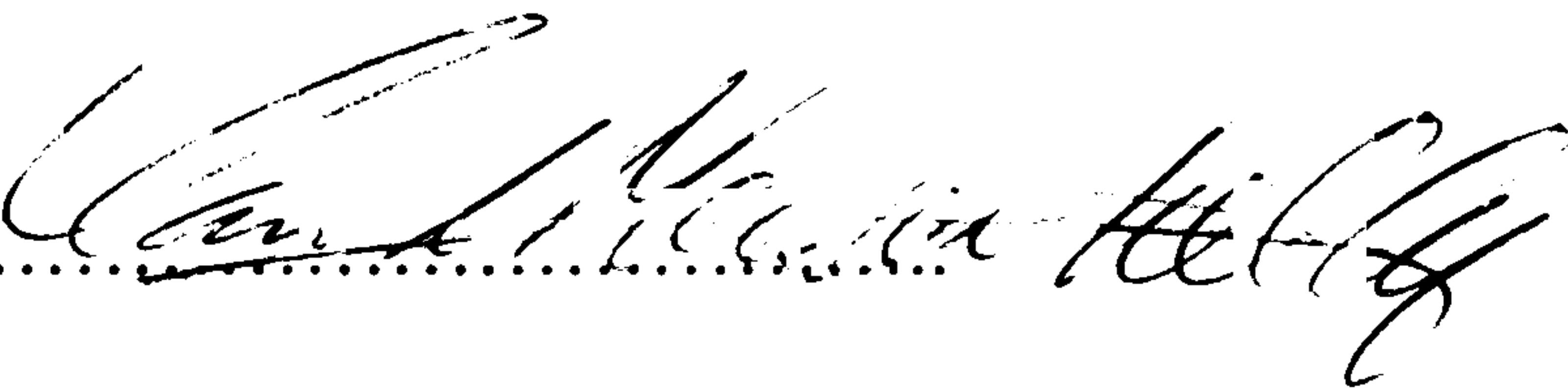
I would also like to thank my husband and parents for their support during my studies.

Author’s Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed.....

Maria Lesley Meyer-Kelly

Date ..31st May 2002.....

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Abbreviations Used In This Study

ALRA	Abortion Law Reform Association
BC	Branches' Council (of CPAG)
CARD	Campaign Against Racial Discrimination
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CPAG	Child Poverty Action Group
CRD	Conservative Research Department
CTA	Child Tax Credits
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Security
DIG	Disablement Income Group
EC	Executive Committee (of CPAG)
FBU	Fire Brigade Union
FES	Family Expenditure Survey
FESoc	Family Endowment Association
FIS	Family Income Supplement
GC	General Council (of TUC)
GMWU	General Municipal Workers' Union
HPSC	Home Policy Sub Committee of the Labour Party
IR	Inland Revenue
LSE	London School of Economics
LTA	Long Term Addition to Supplementary Benefit
MCPAG	Merseyside Child Poverty Action Group
ManCPAG	Manchester Child Poverty Action Group
MPNI	Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance
MSS	Ministry of Social Security
NA	National Assistance
NAB	National Assistance Board
NEC	National Executive Committee of the Labour Party
NFOAPA	National Federation of Old Age Pensioners' Associations
NSPA	National Spinsters' Pension Association
SB	Supplementary Benefit
SBC	Supplementary Benefits Commission
SPSC	Social Policy Sub Committee of the Labour Party
TGWU	Transport and General Workers' Union
TUC	Trades Union Congress

Archive Abbreviations

CPA	Conservative Party Archive, Bodlean Library, University of Oxford
RCP	Crossman Papers, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick
DBP	David Bull's Private Papers
HWP	Harriet Wilson's Private Papers
JVWP	John Veit Wilson's Private Papers
LPA	Labour Party Archive,
PRO	Public Record Office, Labour Movements Centre, Manchester
PTA	Peter Townsend Archive, University of Essex
TUC	Trades Union Congress Archive, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

1 Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is fourfold. Its first objective is to justify the need for this study. It will do this by reviewing the literature already available on Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) and other pressure groups and explaining why there is a need for a further study. The second purpose of this chapter is to map out the structure of the rest of the thesis. A third role is the explanation of the methodologies used to make the most effective use of the primary and secondary materials available. Finally, a fourth section summarises the main objectives of CPAG and gives a theoretical and historical background to these objectives.

1.1 *The Need for this Study*

The 1960s saw the formation of a large number of single-issue pressure groups focusing on social policy issues. Yet despite this fact the literature on such groups is scant. There is an ever expanding literature on pressure group theory but few detailed case studies. A major exception is Penn's thesis of the Sirenians and the Simon Community (Penn 1996). There have however been shorter accounts of Shelter (Frost and Henderson 1975) and the Disablement Income Group (DIG) (Frost 1975). The other accounts of post war social policy pressure groups have either been personal accounts such as those on the Claimants Unions (CUs) (Jordan 1973, Gould and Kenyon 1972) or descriptive histories such as Brasnett's account of the Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CABx) (1969). In the wider field of social policy, but dealing with issues that are the concern of the Home Office, there has been a greater output of work. There have been studies on issues such as prison reform groups and capital punishment (Ryan 1978, Tuttle 1961), race (Heineman 1972) and sexual liberation¹ (Weeks 1990, Hindell and Simms 1971, Grey 1975). Also there has been a growing literature on environmental groups (Kimber and Richardson 1974) and a healthy literature on the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) (Taylor and Pritchard 1980, Mattausch 1989).

CPAG is the best researched of all the 1960s social policy single issue pressure groups. It has already attracted three detailed studies (Worsfold 1971, McCarthy

¹ The author means by this the movements to liberalise abortion, male homosexuality and divorce.

1981 and 1986). In addition, there have been brief accounts of its origins (Banting 1979, Lowe 1995) and an "inside story" of CPAG by a former director (Field 1982). There are two good reasons for a further study of CPAG. Firstly, this study capitalises on a wealth of previously unavailable material and is firmly rooted in a theoretical framework. This has not been achieved satisfactorily by other studies. Secondly, CPAG is a good example of a 1960s pressure group. This is because it had one main aim throughout the period and interacted with a large number of institutions.

McCarthy's 1981 and 1986 accounts are strong on CPAG's relationship with the trades unions. It was on this topic that the former concentrated. However the studies suffer from McCarthy's narrow use of archives. The PRO records were still closed, but the ignoring of the other archives like Crossman's papers and the Conservative Party's archive is less easily explained. In addition, the pool of interviewees was rather too narrow and homogenous. Finally, although pressure group theory is used in the 1986 study, there is no attempt to comment on the effectiveness of CPAG's strategies or to give a comprehensive account of why it was formed.

Worsfold's unfinished PhD thesis (1971) is extremely detailed; this is its strength and its weakness. Although the detail is useful and the study contains original survey material, it does make it hard for the reader to distinguish between important and lesser events and activities. Another shortcoming of the study is that there is virtually no use of pressure group theory to structure arguments

The insider account by a former director, Frank Field, is invaluable for understanding the story of the CPAG from Field's point of view and for gathering evidence about the strategies and methods that CPAG deployed. However the account is a memoir rather than an accurate study. The Banting account concentrates more on the issue of family poverty in the 1960s and therefore the reference to CPAG is brief. Lowe (1995) and Kelly (forthcoming) are both summaries of an aspect of CPAG's early history which introduce seminars at which CPAG and other witnesses of the period discussed, respectively, the issues around the formation of CPAG and its 1970 campaign against the Labour government's record. In addition, Wilson (1986) wrote a short article that

corrected some of the factual mistakes made by Briggs (1984) in his account of the founding of CPAG in his history of Toynbee Hall.

This study is therefore necessary to collate all the previous evidence about CPAG and give it a firm theoretical basis. The study draws on pressure group and political theory to provide a framework in which the CPAG is examined. Therefore, not only is this an accurate history of the CPAG (as far as the records permit) but a case study into how a pressure group of the 1960s and 1970s operated and its significance to the political debate and agenda. An advantage which the author has over McCarthy and Worsfold is that she is acting as a historian looking at the events twenty-seven years later of which she has no personal memory.² On the other hand for Worsfold and McCarthy the potential pool of interviewees was larger and their memories fresher.

1.2 Structure of the Rest of the Thesis

Chapter two introduces the theoretical framework, which underpins this study. The explanations of pressure group theory, offered in section one, explain the rationale for concentrating on CPAG's relationship with certain institutions in this study. The second section summarises the main theories for explaining the emergence of pressure groups. These theories are then examined in the light of the empirical evidence. The third section offers a model for measuring effectiveness. It is this model that provides the basis for addressing the main question posed by this study: how effective was CPAG?

Chapter three discusses the main catalyst for the formation of CPAG, the rediscovery of poverty. The discussion is not limited to Britain but draws on evidence from Europe and the USA. The second half of this chapter is not only a chronology of the first year and a half of CPAG but also an examination of its origins in light of the theories discussed in chapter 2.2.

Chapter four is a comprehensive examination of the tensions within CPAG itself. The internal structure of the group was important not only for the determining strategy but also for providing stability and funding. Chapter five is a hybrid

² J. B. Worsfold was an active member of York CPAG. Therefore he may have been more sympathetic to CPAG's cause than a more neutral observer.

chapter, which combines an examination of the internal dynamics of CPAG's welfare rights strategy with the strategy's effectiveness at furthering CPAG's goals.

Chapters six to nine concentrate on examining CPAG's ability to influence various institutions. In chapter six the attention fixes on the government and its agencies. In chapter seven the political parties and Parliament are the focus. Chapter eight discusses CPAG's relationship with the media and makes some comments about the effect on public opinion. Chapter nine looks at the relationship CPAG had with the trade unions and other pressure groups. Finally chapter ten draws on the theoretical framework of chapter 2.3 in order to examine the effectiveness of CPAG.

1.3 The Methodology

1.3.1 The Approach

The primary objective of this study is to produce an authoritative history of the CPAG in its first ten years. Its secondary purpose is to provide a useful case study for political scientists interested in the evolving nature of pressure groups. As the study has both of these purposes it draws both on the methodologies of social science and history.

The difference between social science methodology and historical methodology is the relationship between theoretical frameworks and evidence. Social science studies are explicitly structured by theoretical constructs (Stanford 1994 p.63). The social scientist uses these often-conflicting theories to make sense of his evidence. Even when the facts cannot be explained by the existing theories, the social scientist's mind is opened to possible other explanations (Stanford 1994 p.96-7). Traditionally, history has used empirical evidence to stimulate and answer questions of why things happened (Tosh 1991 p.114-6, Stanford 1994 p.197-204). However historians do bring with them a number of implicit assumptions and values of which they must be aware (Stanford 1994 p.96-7). However in practice the two approaches can overlap. Historians, for example, can use concepts and frameworks developed in social science to help understand the historical facts of which they strive to make sense.

The main focus of the study is an analysis of the empirical evidence through a search for underlying factors to explain why CPAG took a course of action and estimate its effectiveness. Hence it is in the historical tradition. However, a thorough reading of the available literature on pressure group theory made this analysis fuller in four main ways. Firstly, the theoretical literature mapped out the possible routes of influence that a pressure group was likely to use. This facilitated the selection of institutions to be studied and the division of the study. Secondly, the theoretical literature categorised pressure groups and formulates pure models of various types. This not only gave the author the language with which to describe CPAG, but also a pure model with which to compare the empirical evidence. Thirdly, the theoretical literature offered a number of competing theories about the origin of pressure groups against which CPAG's origins were compared. This exercise allowed the author to consider a number of possible causes. Finally, the theoretical literature offered guidance on how to define and measure effectiveness.

1.3.2 The Gathering of Evidence

There are four main types of historical evidence: the natural evidence of the environment; the evidence of how humans have shaped their environment and the artefacts that they have left; communicative evidence in the form of documents and oral testimony; the *processive* evidence in which a known conclusion can give clues as to the processes (Stanford 1994 p.160-1). The contemporary nature of this study has meant that the evidence has been drawn exclusively from communicative evidence, both documentary and oral. However, the very fact that CPAG survived beyond 1974 as an organisation allows the historian to tentatively deduce either that it was still trying to achieve its goals and thus had not been fully successful before 1974 or that it had new goals.

Historians make two main distinctions between types of communicative evidence. Firstly, they differentiate between secondary sources, a retrospective study of the events, and primary sources, which are contemporary evidence to the period under study (Stanford 1994 p.142). However, in reality evidence does not fit into such clear categories (Stanford 1994 p.142, Tosh 1991 p.32). Archival evidence can be categorised with relatively little controversy as primary. However, although the

interviewees are witnesses to the events, the fact that they took place over thirty years later means that they are an account of a contemporary rather than a contemporary account. Secondly, there is a difference between hard and soft evidence (Stanford 1994 p.145-6), the former being quantitative³ and the latter being qualitative. Although this study occasionally uses hard evidence, most is soft and is dependent on interpretation. It is important to recognise that although the author of a document may have had one purpose, his/her audiences may interpret it differently. The author of this study is detached from the period and culture under study. Therefore, her interpretation is likely to be different again (Stanford 1994 p.146). It is impossible to counter this completely. The only way the author has been able to temper this flaw is by gathering evidence from primary and secondary sources and evaluating it accordingly.

1.3.2.1 The Archival Evidence

Archival evidence has formed the bulk of this study. The papers of the CPAG from this time have been lost. However the combined papers of Professor Peter Townsend,⁴ Dr. Harriet Wilson,⁵ Professor Veit Wilson⁶ and David Bull⁷ have filled some of this gap. However, it would be naive to believe that they are complete. Indeed much of the correspondence found in the Public Record Office (PRO) was not in the CPAG files. This was because the Executive Committee members who kept their papers would not have been given a copy of every letter that was sent. Most of the communication between staff members has also been lost.

In order to understand what was happening inside government at this time, the author examined government papers at the PRO. The most relevant papers to this study were those of the DHSS, SBC and their predecessors, the Prime Minister, and the Treasury. Although it has not been unknown for public papers to be tampered with and certainly most of the routine papers have been destroyed, in general the public records contain most of the important documents of this time.

³ Quantitative evidence is generally not completely reliable. When surveys are taken the representativeness of the sampling can alter results considerably, as can the measures used.

⁴ Chair from 1969-1989.

⁵ Founder member and honorary secretary throughout period

⁶ Founder member and Executive Committee member throughout the period.

⁷ Member of the Executive Committee from 1967 and active in Manchester and Bristol branches.

Some meetings between politicians were informal and left no record. Crossman, for example, talks in his diaries of people meeting in private homes in the evenings. A serious limitation of the PRO records to this study is the thirty-year rule. In addition to the papers available at the PRO, there are the Crossman papers at Warwick University. These are mostly the advisory papers which Brian Abel Smith, Crossman's advisor, produced. Some of these papers are not in the PRO.

Both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party have archives. The Conservative Party's is well organised and most of the papers of the Research Department were available for the whole period, although understandably the Conservative Research Department was most active during the period of Labour government and just before the 1974 election. The only identifiable omission was that no record had been kept of the proceedings of the Parliamentary backbench committees. The Labour Party's archive is less complete and none of the records of the Research Department other than its memoranda are available. Only the proceedings of the National Executive Committee, the main policy making committee of the Labour Party, and its sub-committees: the Home Policy Sub-Committee and the Social Policy Sub-Committee are available to researchers. The Social Policy Sub-Committee was itself disbanded between 1968 and 1971, leaving a gap. In addition the author looked at the Trades Union Congress records which are complete for the whole period.

In the case of all these archives, the usefulness of all the materials varies. Letters, memoranda and discussion papers in all the archives tend to be rich with information. The minutes of meetings are invaluable for understanding the main topics of discussion at Cabinet, at CPAG, at the General Council of Trades Unions Congress (TUC) and party sub-committee meetings. However, the minutes only record decisions with scant regard to the different views aired. They do not give any flavour of the heated debate that might have taken place.

A major source of information both to understanding the debates of the time (Tosh 1991 p.37) and to evaluating CPAG's success at using publicity machinery is the press. Of course by the 1960s and 1970s there was a multitude of different national and local newspapers. Selecting a number of national newspapers and comparing them with CPAG press releases, as well as using the *Times* and *New*

Society indices, the author was able to manage her use the press, of which the volume would have otherwise have been unmanageable.

The Crossman Diaries are a rich source of information on the Labour governments. As Lord President and later Secretary of State for the Social Services, Crossman's descriptions of events enrich the Cabinet minutes. In addition his frank views are invaluable for understanding his part in the relationship between CPAG and the government. The publicly available version of the diary has been edited but the author was able to gain access to the originals. However the diaries even in their original state are not a neutral account of events. The diaries are a personal and one-sided account (Morgan 1987 p.24, Pimlott 1987 p.26, Ennals 1987 p.27), which omit important details in which Crossman had little interest or knowledge (Jay 1987 p.27, Powell 1987 p.29). Crossman's views on the role of Cabinet and on the neutrality of civil servants have been criticised by a number of commentators (Godber 1987 p.28, Jones 1987 p.25 Powell 1987 p.29). The diaries can be used in conjunction with the archival evidence and with oral testimony from other witnesses (see below 1.3.2.2).

There were four other primary documentary sources used in this study. Firstly, the conference reports of the political parties and the TUC. These give transcripts of the speeches made. These are useful for discovering what issues were important to conference. However informal meetings, conversations and activities at conference are not recorded. Also the debates at conference are the conclusion of a complicated procedure of resolutions and motions, which go through a number of filters between proposal and being debated at conference. These processes are only evident from some archival material and from oral evidence. Secondly, Hansard is invaluable as a record of Parliamentary debates and discussions. Thirdly, the published reports of the National Assistance Board/Supplementary Benefit Commission (NAB/SBC) for the period were used. However, these reports tend to be bland statements or quantitative evidence. The more full reports of the SBC did not reappear until 1975. Finally, the appendices of the Worsfold study are a source of statistical and documentary evidence.

1.3.2.2 Oral Testimony

There is a large amount of documentary evidence on which to base this study. However, the continued closure of the records of the Conservative administration at the time this study was written means that any evidence about how CPAG worked with the government must be gleaned from the other archival evidence and from oral testimony.

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages of using oral testimony. Certainly, oral evidence is not only crucial for situations as above when the public records are closed but also for gaining information on informal meetings and contacts which are not recorded. It also can shed light on personalities in informal relationships (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.38, 40), as well as the practical division of influence within the various organisations. Oral evidence can also put events in a long-term perspective (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.40). Documents can be deceptive as to the importance of certain issues and events. Written record of important things may be missing and a number of well-written documents can lead the historian to over-estimate the importance of an issue or an event. The oral testimony of a number of people can help to ameliorate this problem. The author also sought the views of "witnesses" about CPAG, as just one aspect of her quest to evaluate its effectiveness. Finally, the physical visiting of witnesses can lead to important documentary sources in private hands (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.46). This was certainly the experience of the author of this study, who received documentary evidence from six witnesses.

There are a number of problems with oral testimony. Firstly, as in the case of this study, the interview can be many years later and memory can be unreliable (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.17). The witness now has the benefit of hindsight and may have been influenced by subsequent reading on the events, indeed "the voice of the past is inescapably the voice of the present too" (Tosh 1991 p.214). Seldon and Pappworth argue that interviewees are usually more reliable at commenting on a unique or routine events (1983 p.18). There is also the problem that some people consciously rewrite history. This is not as common as suggested by critics of oral history (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.19). Yet all witness statements can be compared to other testimonies and documentary evidence and

evaluations can be made about the likely reliability of the witness. The same is true for misrepresentation through oversimplification, vindictiveness and superficiality (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.19-21). Oral evidence is most effectively used as a complement to archival evidence. It is particularly useful when the records are still closed. However, oral evidence (particularly thirty years after the events), is only as reliable as the memory affected by hindsight.

The author of this study interviewed fourteen witnesses who were involved with or observed CPAG (see appendix K). However, over thirty years had lapsed and a number of potential witnesses had died and others had become untraceable. It was possible to interview most of the key figures in CPAG at this time, but not all. Most of the politicians were no longer available but this was remedied by speaking to a then junior Conservative Minister and the private secretary to both Crossman and Joseph. Other civil servants were able to describe not only events and therefore clarify some of the issues prompted by the records but reflect on the informal relationships and continuity between governments.

It would have been interesting to have spoken to more people from the Conservative Party at that time. The reasons for not doing so were twofold. Firstly, a number were invited to a witness seminar (reported in Kelly forthcoming), but were unable to attend. Secondly, it was felt that given interviews were very time consuming it was important to only interview key persons at the time. The Conservative Party's view was covered by the interview with Lord Dean, the interviews with civil servants and the detailed records in the Conservative Party archive.

A number of people involved in CPAG at the time have subsequently become important figures in public life. However, it was important to restrict the interviews to those who were pivotal at the time. On the other hand, a few people, such as Sean Creighton and Audrey Harvey, would have been important interviewees but were not possible to trace or had died.

Each witness was a specialist in a different aspect of the study; therefore questions were tailored for individual interviews with just the questions on effectiveness being asked at each interview. The interviewee was allowed to diverge from the

question, especially if this was yielding information. This is consistent with the advice of Seldon and Pappworth (1983 p.82). Although there is debate in the literature as to the best location for an interview (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.65, Oppenheim 1992 p.69, Dexter 1970 p.47), the author found that when interviewing the priority was to allow the witness to choose the location most convenient for him or her. Finally, there is some debate about whether interviews should be noted or recorded (Seldon and Pappworth 1983 p.69-71). All but two the interviews in this study were recorded. This was because the author found that recording an interview not only allowed a more natural dialogue between the interviewee and herself but also ensured that there was a reliable record.

1.4 The Policy, Social and Economic Background of the Period 1965-74

CPAG did not work in a vacuum it was influenced, helped and restricted by the social, economic and political environment in which it worked. The purpose of this section is to explore CPAG's main policy issues and give them a social, economic and political context. The fundamental criterion for measuring effectiveness has to be what was actually possible at the time, this sub-section is important for the later evaluation of CPAG. The first part concentrates on the main issue for CPAG, child poverty. The second section looks at some of the wider issues about which CPAG campaigned.

1.4.1 The Policy Options for Relieving Family Poverty

Once family poverty did achieve political importance, both Harold Wilson's Labour government (1964-70) and Edward Heath's Conservative government (1970-74) had a number of options from which to select a solution. There were four main factors, which led to family poverty. Large families were most at risk of falling into poverty (MSS 1967a p.20). This was because even a reasonable wage was stretched when it had to provide for seven people or more. However most families in poverty were smaller families of less than three children (MSS 1967a p.20), they were forced into poverty by the very low wages that they could earn. Thirdly, there were growing numbers of one-parent families, especially in the later 1960s and early 1970s (Kiernan et al 1998 p.50). Most of this group was not

covered by National Insurance (NI) and therefore reliant on National Assistance Supplementary Benefit (NA/SB). The final reason was that in some areas, especially London, rents were very high and as a fixed cost reduced the resources the family had for other expenditure.

One of the key features of family poverty at this time was that it was very much a problem of those in work. Unemployment, although increasing at this time, was historically very low. Studies showed that a large number of families in poverty relied on wages as their main source of income (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.41). If the poverty of workers' families was to be alleviated either wages had to be raised for the lowest paid or they had to be supplemented to allow for the size of the family whilst the father was in work, as they were when he was out of work. The former could be done by either the introduction of a minimum wage or an adjustment to the incomes policy. The latter could be achieved through higher family allowances, a negative income tax or a means tested supplement.

1.4.1.1 The Minimum wage

The main justifications for a minimum wage were that as some wages were extremely low, even higher family allowances could not bring the family to the SB level (Field and Townsend 1970 p.14). There were three main problems with the minimum wage. Firstly, it would not help larger families enough (CAB 134/2586, PRO). In addition there would still be no improvement in the horizontal equity between families and the childless. Secondly, there was a fear that a minimum wage could cause unemployment and price less productive workers such as the unskilled and disabled out of the labour market (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.253, Cmnd 4649 p.182). The costs to industry would not be restricted to the simple increase in low wages. Higher paid workers would move to re-establish their differentials. This would increase the cost to industry by an even greater amount. Although these costs may be absorbed by the industry it is far more likely that prices would increase and thus cause inflation (Cmnd 4649 p.182, Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.254). Hence, the third problem was that the real value of the increases would be eroded by the price inflation and any temporary increase in the low paid worker's situation in relation to other workers would be eroded by the re-establishing of differentials. Thus although absolute

poverty could temporarily be alleviated, relative poverty would remain. A Labour Cabinet Committee investigating the possibility of the national minimum wage in 1968 concluded therefore that social security benefits would be more effective at tackling poverty (CAB 134/2586, PRO)

1.4.1.2 Adjusting the Incomes Policy

The Prices and Incomes Policy from 1965 controlled the amount of prices and wage increases. As the problem of family poverty became more apparent, one solution would be to allow the lowest paid workers higher pay increases than their colleagues as the TUC advocated (Hughes 1968 p.14). However there were two problems with this strategy. Firstly, trades unions had established differentials for different skills. If the lowest paid were given higher pay increases these differentials would erode and more skilled and experienced workers would earn little more than their unskilled colleagues. Hence allowing the lowest paid higher increases would cause trade union resentment and could undermine the Prices and Incomes policy (Brittan 1971 p.406-7). Secondly, as with the minimum wage, giving all workers a pay increase did not solve the problem of absolute family poverty, as all workers regardless of their family responsibilities would gain the same amount. It was also far more expensive than selectively raising family allowances ((68) 50 CAB 129/135, PRO).

1.4.1.3 Family Allowances

The Beveridge blue print for the welfare state made three assumptions that underpinned the social insurance scheme: the comprehensive and universal health service, the maintenance of full employment and the payment of family allowances from general taxation for all children excluding the first. Beveridge argued that as social insurance and social security benefits allowed extra for dependants, a family man could gain more whilst out of work than whilst in work. Family allowances would adjust wages to family responsibilities and thus maintain incentives to work. Beveridge also advocated family allowances as a way of increasing the birth rate (Cmd 6404 1942 p.421). This was of real concern in the 1930s and 1940s (Land 1975 p.171). Although in Parliament the introduction of family allowances was mostly linked to the Beveridge arguments

about want and work incentives, in the media the link was made between the declining birth rate and family allowances. The Royal Commission on Population published in 1949 suggested the increase of family allowances to encourage the birth rate (Land 1975 p.222-4).

Family allowances were never introduced at the 8 shilling rate Beveridge suggested. Instead in 1945 they were introduced at 5 shillings. The smaller amount was justified by the benefits that children would receive in kind namely school milk and meals.⁸ In 1951, a three-child family gained only 7% of the average manual wage in family allowances. The relative value declined to 6% by 1961 despite two small increases in the 1950s to offset the loss of food subsidies. By 1966 the allowances were worth only 4% (Banting 1979 p.46) . There was a general hostility to family allowances in the 1950s. When asked where government expenditure should be cut family allowances were the favourite target after defence. 43% of people wanted to spend less on family allowances and only 23% wanted to spend more. The comparable figures for pensions are 6% and 81% (Gallup 1976 p.290 and 295). There were three reasons why family allowances seemed less relevant to the majority of the population. Firstly, the link between family allowances and increasing the birth rate was unfortunate as the baby booms gave rise to fears that Britain was over-populated (Cmnd 5258 1973 p.47). Secondly, as more married women went out to work the feminist arguments for an independent income for the mother became less relevant (Land 1975 p.229). Thirdly, as the tax threshold fell, the more regularly increased child tax allowances were enjoyed by more voters. In addition there was no pressure on the government to help families.

However, by the mid-1960s family allowances were being discussed at Cabinet level again. Universal family allowances were a simple benefit, which had a one hundred percent take-up, caused no stigma to the recipients and had no disincentive effects. The help was concentrated on families with children. However, they were expensive to raise universally. Even to raise family allowances by 7 shillings for all children but the first would have cost £160 million (Lord President CAB 128/42 c(67)27). To raise family allowances to

⁸ Milk was provided universally until 1968. However meals were only ever offered on a means tested basis, although they were subsidised for all children until the 1970s.

between 18 shillings and 32 shillings, 6 pence (depending on the age and birth-position of the child) in 1967 would have cost £680-700 million (CPAG 1967 p.iv). This was a considerable amount of money for governments trying to cut public expenditure. Given the unpopularity of family allowances there was little political will to spend these sums. Another disadvantage of family allowances was that they did not target resources at the poorest. There was little support in 1960s Britain (unlike France) for a policy, which supported families *per se*. This was true for the government, the political establishment (such as the parties and the trades unions) and CPAG itself (see chapter 4.2.3.3). The emphasis was on tackling poverty. The cost of family allowances could be reduced by either only giving them to certain children in the family (first children were already excluded and this could have been taken further to exempt second children) or by only giving them to poorer families.

The justification for limiting family allowances rises to either the third, the fourth or the fifth (depending on the plan) and subsequent children was that as large families were more likely to be below the poverty line than small families, it was a way of tackling some of the worst poverty. However there were more small families below the poverty line than large families (MSS 1967 p.11). In addition, given the hostility to large, poor families, any move to favour them at the expense of smaller families would have been unpopular.

The second option of a selective increase according to income could be managed in one of two ways. The first way was for a means tested supplement to family allowances (see below 1.4.1.5) while the second was for the family allowance to be increased and the child tax allowance to be reduced or abolished if the increase in family allowances was substantial. The simplest way in which this could be achieved was through "give and take", a simple reduction of child tax allowance and increase of family allowances. However the problem was that the qualifications for child tax allowance and family allowances were different. Most importantly family allowances were only payable until the child had reached his/her sixteenth year. Child tax allowance was payable until the child left full

time education. The residential requirements were also different.⁹ Claw-back, developed in 1967 by Professor Nicholas Kaldor¹⁰, eliminated these problems. It reduced the general tax allowances of all tax-payers whose wives were receiving family allowances. Thus the anomaly was avoided although the direct link between child tax allowance and family allowances was severed.

There were two problems with claw-back (and the same was true for "give and take"). Firstly, it lowered the tax threshold and therefore increased the work of the Inland Revenue. Secondly and of more importance to the government, it redistributed money from the husband's pay packet to his wife's family allowances: the so-called wallet to the purse. This was likely to cause resentment amongst men who noticed the cut in their pay packet but did not notice the increase in their wives' family allowances.

1.4.1.4 Negative Income Tax (NIT)

NIT was originally developed by the New Right economist Milton Friedman in the USA in 1962 (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.248). The idea was developed in Britain not only by the Conservatives¹¹ but also by the Left. Labour's Minimum Income Guarantee, a plan to give pensioners a minimum income based on their completion of a tax form announced in Labour's 1964 manifesto, was a form of NIT (Labour Party 1964 p.16). A fledgling CPAG put forward NIT proposals in June 1965 (see chapter 3.2.1). The main principle that underpinned all NIT schemes was that all tax-payers would receive flat rate tax allowances according to their responsibilities. These would be set against tax and those earning more than their allowances would pay tax, whilst those earning less would have a positive credit added to their wage packet (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.249).

⁹These affected far less people. However a person whose children lived abroad would be entitled to child tax allowance but not family allowances for them. Likewise a person who had not established six months residency in the UK would be a similar situation.

¹⁰ An economic advisor to the Chancellor of the Exchequer who developed a variant of give and take called claw-back.

The idea of NIT in the form of social dividends had independently been developed by Lady Rhys Williams as early as 1942. This scheme would give all members of society a flat rate social dividend or allowance (according to responsibility) and then tax all other income (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.249).

¹¹ The idea of NIT in the form of social dividends had independently been developed by Lady Rhys Williams as early as 1942. This scheme would give all members of society a flat rate social dividend or allowance (according to responsibility) and then tax all other income (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.249).

There were three main reasons why various forms of NIT became the Holy Grail of social policy in the 1960s and 1970s. Firstly, the automatic nature of NIT would eradicate the stigma of applying for social security benefits and would ensure full take up (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.251, Webb 1975 p.425). Secondly, NIT would not have as great a disincentive effect to increase earnings as means tested benefits (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.251).¹² Thirdly, NIT was selective. Labour was as keen as the Conservatives in the 1960s to portray itself as selective in tackling poverty. In addition, the neatness of one system for taxation and social security rather than two, it was hoped, would make administrative savings (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.251).

The main disadvantages of NIT were administrative and cost. Firstly, tax return forms asked no questions about the cost of housing and the capital, although this information would have to be attained to make the system fair and effective. Secondly, as many people never filled in tax return forms the Inland Revenue had to find ways to ensure that everyone filled in one. Thirdly, tax forms were completed annually and the poor needed help on a far more regular basis (Lapping 1970 p.146). The self-employed are difficult to include because they are not part of the PAYE scheme. Also, on cost grounds, unless the credits are to be raised to levels which would require very high taxation even for middle earners, the very poor have to be excluded or still rely for a sizeable part of their income on means tested benefits (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.252). If the credits are paid through the wage packet then there will be a move from the purse to the wallet as child credits replace family allowances and are paid to the father.

1.4.1.5 Means Tested Allowances

Part of the popularity of the Beveridge report was its rejection of the means test in favour of an universalist system. The degradation associated with the household means test of the 1930s and the resentment caused (Bradshaw and Deacon 1983 p.5-29) as well as memories of the Poor Law meant that there was resentment to means testing in the post war period.

¹² There is a greater disincentive with NIT than universal benefits. This is because as earnings rise, the allowance decreases (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.250).

The backlash against universalism started in 1950 with the One Nation Group of Conservatives, which included Heath, Macleod and Powell. Macleod and Powell famously asked not why "should a means test be applied to a social service?" but "why should any social service be provided without a test of need?" (Macleod and Powell 1952 p.5). In 1955, the campaign for more selectivity was given an "independent voice" with the formation of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). Ideally, most of the selectivists were in favour of the non-stigmatising approach of a negative income tax. However, that was a long-term policy option.

In the 1960s there were two types of means tested benefit on the table designed to help families with children: a housing benefit for families designed to ease the problem of high rents and a means tested supplement to wages based on the number of children in the family. There were two advantages of means tested benefits: They were cheap and targeted the poorest.

However, there were two drawbacks of means tested benefits. The most obvious was the problem of take up. No means tested benefit, except university grants, approached 100% take up and few managed the 80% take up of school meals. Even the Conservative government's huge publicity boosts for their means tested supplement to wages, resulted in a take up of less than 60% rather than the government's hoped for 85% for Family Income Supplement (FIS) (Timmins 1995 p.283-4). The whole benefits system was becoming a jungle. The idea of a housing allowance would have added to the confusing array of housing benefits that included rent rebates, rate rebates and the payment of rent by the SBC.

The second problem was the poverty trap. The problem with concentrating benefits on the poor is that as they increase their earnings, their entitlement to means tested benefits decrease. Thus a family might be worse off with a small increase in earnings if its entitlements to means tested benefits stopped. In practice the cut off points for means tested benefits were staggered. Thus FIS had a 50% taper. Field and Piachaud pointed out in *The Poverty Trap* that an increase in 1970 for a single person from £16.50 per week to £20 per week would leave her £2.50 *net* better off. The same increase for a married man with one child would leave him 90p *net* better off (Field 1982 p.106). Such little net benefit discouraged the

low paid from increasing their earnings. On the other side of the coin, means tested supplements to wages were accused of holding down wages.

1.4.2 Other CPAG Campaigning Issues

The key strategy for CPAG was to persuade the government to raise family allowances. This was the key to easing family poverty. However, throughout the period 1965 to 1974 it also raised a multitude of issues, all of which had some link to family poverty. In 1966, Tony Lynes used his role as secretary of CPAG to draw attention to the wage stop (see chapters 6.4). The wage stop meant that a family could not receive more in social security than it had received whilst in work. Although it was challenged by MPs on both sides of the House throughout the period, it was accepted by both the Labour and Conservative governments at this time as undesirable that a man should receive more whilst on benefit than at work (Webb 1975 p.455).

As social security benefits increased and the earnings of lower paid failed to keep up with those of the higher paid (Hughes 1968 p.12-13, Cmnd 4649 p.182), the problem of the wage stop became worse (see appendix B). A minimum wage would have eased the wage stop. However as most of the people affected had larger families, to make the wage stop obsolete, a minimum wage would have had to have been set at an intolerably high level for the economy. CPAG's solution was higher family allowances. This option would raise the income of families in work and alleviate the wage stop. Thus CPAG rightly identified that the wage stop was a symptom of family poverty of those families in work as well as out of work. What actually did ease the wage stop was the introduction of means tested benefits such as FIS and Housing Benefit in the 1970s which supported low-earning working families (Beltram interview).

A recurrent theme for CPAG was tackling the stigma linked to benefits and specifically making benefits a right rather than dependent on the discretion of the NAB (see chapter 5). After its plans for a Minimum Income Guarantee were thwarted by administrative problems, the Labour government moved in this direction. The 1966 Social Security Act made the new Ministry of Social Security (MSS) responsible not only for contributory benefits but also the non-contributory

benefits. At a local level the offices were supposed to merge. The NAB was renamed the SBC and became more under the control of the Minister. Discretion was reduced with the new long-term addition (LTA), for recipients dependent on SB for more than a year, replacing a multitude of discretionary benefits. The Act itself emphasised that SB was a right of all citizens. The benefit for pensioners could not be reduced in any circumstances (Webb 1975 p.457-8). The re-branding itself was intended to remove some of the stigma.

Although the change in name and the emphasis on rights were important developments (Webb 1975 p.458), the Act did not change as much as it promised. The NI and NAB offices found it difficult to merge, for the simple reason SB clients required means tests whilst NI ones did not, it proved impossible to deal with both groups in one office (Lapping 1970 p.152). In addition the ambience of the SBC Offices did nothing to make the clients feel like clients with rights. Instead, many had no lavatories and the chairs were screwed to the floor because of the fear of damage and assault to officers (Lapping 1970 p.152, Timmins 1995 p.229). Harold Wilson's boasts that "hundreds of thousands of the least well off members of the community now claimed their rights" were supported by figures showing 365,000 more claimants in a year (Timmins 1995 p.228). However the economist Atkinson estimated that the rise in the rates meant that between a half and a third of these extra claimants were newly entitled claimants because of the higher scale (Webb 1975 p.466-7). The Act did replace the word assistance with rights but did not go far enough for groups like CPAG. Chapter five evaluates CPAG's attempts to use the tribunal system and courts to reinforce claimants' rights. CPAG's influence over the SBC is analysed in chapter 6.4.

CPAG became involved in a number of unemployment related issues. Ironically, it was Labour's attempt to soften the blow of unemployment with the earnings-related unemployment benefit in 1966 that introduced the wage stop into contributory benefits. In order to maintain work incentives there was a ceiling of 85% of earnings on the benefit (Hill 1995 p.67, Glennerster 1995 p.106). CPAG was thus able to use this fact to emphasise that the income of many working families was so low that even the contributory benefits had to be capped whilst they were unemployed. The answer again was to raise the income of families in

work through family allowances. Under pressure from the tabloids about the problem of "scroungers", Labour was keen to show that although generous to the deserving poor it could be tough on "scroungers". Thus to CPAG's dismay an entitlement campaign in 1968 was accompanied by moves to force people into work. A four-week rule for single, unskilled men and three months for married and skilled men was introduced. This rule meant that subject to appeal, all rights to SB were cut off after this amount of time in areas where there were jobs available (Lynes 1968 p.2). In October 1968 111,000 men were given a four week and 8,000 a three month warning (Hansard vol.798 p.20). Thus, under Labour policy did not always move in the direction CPAG wanted. One criterion of CPAG's effectiveness will be its ability to prevent legislation moving in an adverse direction as well as promoting favourable legislation.

A particular *cause célèbre* of CPAG was the cohabitation rule, particularly by the early 1970s. The cohabitation rule rested on the widely accepted belief that the unmarried couple should not be more generously treated than the married (Kiernan *et al* 1998 p.173-5, Hansard vol. 836 p.1894). The family orientated slant of the system, which awarded benefits to the head of the household (i.e. the man) for his whole family, meant that if a woman was living with a man *as his wife* then he was paid benefits for the whole household. The problem was deciding when a woman was cohabiting. There was no legal definition for this and too often the definition rested on the sexual relationship between the couple rather than any evidence that they were living as a *de facto* married couple. Thus chapter five looks at CPAG's attempts to get a definition through the courts. However cohabitation was just one issue facing a growing group of single mothers in the 1960s and 1970s (Kiernan *et al* 1998 p.164). Widows were entitled to generous NI benefits but the majority of single mothers who were divorcées and never-married mothers were dependent long term on SB (Kiernan *et al* 1998 p.167). The thorny question was referred to the Finer Committee, where it stayed until 1974.

The issue of free school dinners was an early cause for CPAG. The stigmatising practices of many schools in allocating meals to their poorer students were exposed by CPAG and the government reacted by encouraging parents to claim their free school meals in 1967. Free welfare foods for pre-school children had a

take up of 4% for non-SB recipients, something CPAG periodically highlighted from the mid-1960s (Field 1971 p.11). For children over the school leaving age the only provision remained a local authority benefit. This was despite Labour's promise to help children staying at school after the age of sixteen with higher, graduated family allowances (Labour 1964 p.14). By 1973, the welfare rights work had drawn local CPAGs' attention to the wider issue of education costs. Technology and sports lessons demanded materials for which parents had to pay and school uniforms could be expensive and were not fully compensated by local authority discretionary grants (Bristol CPAG 1973). Universal school milk was to CPAG's dismay, first the target of Labour and later Conservative cuts (Hill 1995 p.89).

CPAG protested against the Labour government's decision to reintroduce prescription charges as an expenditure cutting measure in 1967 (Hill 1995 p.82). However Labour's emphasis on the temporary nature of the charges muted the anger to a degree and it was the Conservatives' plans to relate costs to the price of the drug, which provoked more anger. In the field of family planning both Labour and the Conservatives moved towards freer choice for all couples. Labour liberalised the provision of contraception in 1967 and abortion in 1969. The Conservatives made the oral contraceptive pill free on the National Health Service in 1972. Although individual members of CPAG may have applauded these moves, the national body stayed silent on the family planning debate, ever aware that the greater choice prejudiced feelings against large families further and that limiting families should not be supported as a method of reducing family poverty (Lynes 1965 p.435).

Although housing had its own pressure group in Shelter, CPAG did become involved in the debate of how the poor should be helped with their housing costs. It was on this issue that both CPAG and Labour were hampered by their own deeply held ideologies. Local authority housing was supported by £288 million in subsidies from central and local government in 1966-7.¹³ These subsidies reduced the rents of local authority tenants and were thus not means tested. However, many of the poorest tenants were forced to live in privately rented accommodation

¹³ This figure is obtained by adding the total current expenditure costs to the local authorities of local authority housing and the subsidies that they received from Central government (Lowe 1999 p.240).

as some local authorities had residential qualifications and did not even consider some groups such as lone mothers as households in their own right (Lapping 1970 p.171, Kiernan *et al* 1998 p.220-1). Labour tried to patch up the system by introducing its fair rents legislation to prevent exorbitant rents, introducing relief on property based local authority taxes (rate rebates) and encouraging local authorities to introduce schemes to help poorer local authority tenants with their rents. However rate rebates had a low take-up rate, not least because many of the poorest families did not know that they paid rates as part of their rent (Field 1970 p.13).

The Conservatives' Housing Finance Act in 1972 removed the subsidy from local authority housing and paid means tested housing benefits to tenants and householders alike. CPAG protested at the rise in local authority tenants' rents and the aggravation of the poverty trap but it was this legislation which helped some of the poorest private tenants (Hill 1995 p.99). CPAG remained critical of the huge subsidies pumped into owner-occupation by both parties throughout the period. Some £328 million was given in tax relief on mortgages in 1971-2; local authority housing was at that time attracting subsidies from local and central government of £570 millions. However, the Conservatives wishing to build a property-owning democracy, for which the Conservatives would be the natural party, and Labour mindful of working class enthusiasm for owning a home both continued to support this sector.

Thus although family allowances and the direct relief of child poverty was the main thrust of CPAG's campaign there were a number of other issues on which CPAG campaigned. All of these issues affected poor families and all were due to the fact that the family had too low an income in order to provide for the minimum life style acceptable in 1960s and 1970s Britain. In evaluating whether CPAG was effective in achieving its main goal, the impact of these other issues will be evaluated in two ways. Firstly, some of the issues such as the wage stop were direct symptoms of the problems of working low-income families; thus this study will evaluate how they were presented by CPAG. Secondly, other issues such as the cohabitation rule and the use of discretionary benefits were related but separate issues. This study will not only have to evaluate how they were furthered

per se, but also whether campaigning for some issues furthered or hindered the campaign for better family allowances.

1.4.3 Economic Performance

1.4.3.1 *The Economic Context*

A pressure group has to try and persuade the government to adopt policies which will further its aims (see chapter 2.1). If the policy change involves extra expenditure, which the abolition of poverty almost inevitably does, the pressure group does not just have to persuade the government of the desirability of its proposals but also its ability to afford them. If the economy is strong then the government will be easier to persuade of this fact. Neither the Labour nor the Conservative governments presided over a strong economy. Labour spent the first three years of its rule fighting a losing battle of supporting the over-valued pound against devaluation. Finally, in November 1967, it accepted the inevitable devaluation after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) refused to prop up the currency further. The unpleasant short term effects of devaluation, which Labour had been trying to avoid, were higher prices and thus inflationary pressures needed to be dealt with. Hence, the government raised SB and family allowances to protect the poorest in exchange for unions not pushing for inflationary wage increases. Devaluation did, however, bring the balance of payments back into balance (Lapping 1970 p.46-9). Labour bequeathed its Conservative successors a much stronger economy than they had inherited in 1964.

Labour's plans for office had been based on a rate of growth of 4% *per annum*. The historically high 2.5% *per annum* between 1964 and 1969¹⁴ was disappointing and led to the abandonment of the plan (Lapping 1970 p.42). The disappointing growth rate meant that not everything in the plan could be achieved without increasing the government's share of GDP through higher taxes. Not only would significantly higher taxes be unpopular politically but they could also damage investment. The government was pushed into cuts in public expenditure,

¹⁴ There was an average growth rate of 2.8% per annum in GDP between 1948 and 1973. This should be compared with 2.2% between 1924 and 1937. However the economy grew 3.1% between 1960 and 1964 and 3.0% 1969 to 1973 (Lowe 1999 p.69).

especially during the economic turndown of 1967. Thus any new policy which meant an increase in expenditure was unlikely to be favoured.

The Conservatives were committed to cutting public expenditure to allow them to cut income taxes. The mini-budget of October 1970 slashed public expenditure. Growth between 1969-1973 increased at 3% *per annum*, slightly higher than preceding years but still not enough to allow either the cutting of income taxes whilst leaving the welfare state intact or the increasing of public expenditure.

Labour was rocked by large numbers of unofficial strikes during its time of office. Proposals to make these illegal (under the title of *In Place of Strife*) were put forward by Barbara Castle in 1968. However trade union opposition meant that Labour had to abandon the plans (Lapping 1970 p.52). The Conservatives revived these proposals in 1971 as the Industrial Relations Act. The result was a souring of relations with the TUC and an unprecedented number of strikes. Essential groups of workers such as dockers, gas workers, power workers, miners and others repeatedly went on strike (Ball 1996 p.391-405). The Miners' strike in 1973-4 reduced the country to a three-day week of work. It was generally thought during the 1950s that there should be no price increases at all (Lowe 1999 p.70). However some inflation was inevitable when the government was committed to full employment which created a tight labour market and thus pressure on wages. Inflation was 5.4% *per annum* between 1964 and 1972, far higher than the 3.7% *per annum* average between 1951 and 1963. It was the first OPEC oil crisis of 1972 that forced inflation to double figures, reaching 16.1% in 1973-4 (Lowe 1999 p.70).

Theoretically, there are two main ways of relieving inflationary pressures. The first is through deflating the economy. It would mean reducing growth in the economy, thus reducing the amount of consumption and employment. This would weaken wage demands and general demand in the economy and thus inflation. The second method was to allow growth to continue and to continue to guarantee full employment, but at the same time impose a Prices and Incomes Policy on both sides of industry. In return for companies restraining price increases on their goods and services, trade unions would restrict their wage demands. Both Wilson and Heath honoured the post war commitment to full employment and opted for

the second option (Lapping 1970 p.38-40, Timmins 1995 p.307. Lowe 1996 p.194). The oil crisis did mean however that public expenditure had to be reigned in. The Department of Health and Social Security lost £111 million, Education lost £182 million (Timmins 1995 p.308). The Conservatives were not just cutting public expenditure for ideological reasons but after 1971 out of economic necessity. It was against this background of disappointing economic growth, creeping and later spiralling inflation and general economic difficulties that CPAG was asking for an increase in family allowances.

2. Chapter Two: Theoretical Perspectives

In order to analyse the early development of CPAG it is essential to make use of pressure group theory. This identifies important issues in relation to the origins, nature and tactics and effectiveness of such groups. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section is a summary of the literature available on pressure group theory. It is the concepts described in this section that provide the theoretical framework on which this study draws. The second section concentrates specifically on the origins of pressure groups. It examines the theoretical explanations available and matches them against empirical evidence. The final section outlines some established models of effectiveness and raises the questions, which will define effectiveness throughout the study.

2.1 *Pressure Group Theory*

2.1.1 Support

Most authors differentiate between groups working for a vested interest and those that are working for a cause. The former are termed *representational* or *sectional* groups and the latter *promotional* or *cause* groups.¹⁵ A representational group speaks for its clientele and covers a large spectrum. At one end are the large, producer, professional and business organisations, which Finer categorises as having a strong central organisation and concentrating on the executive (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.86); many of these can threaten and deploy sanctions against the government (Grant 1995 p.140). At the other end of the spectrum there are groups consisting of citizens trying to further their own interests such as the CUs or the Prisoners' Wives and Families Organisation (PWFO), which consist of marginalised groups in society. Despite the huge gulf between these groups in

¹⁵ "Sectional" and "cause" groups are the terms used by Grant (1995). Representational and promotional are used by Whiteley and Winyard (1987). However Alderman (1984) differentiates between sectional groups that are interested in a certain section of the community (hence under this definition the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, CPAG and DIG are all sectional) and cause groups that are defined as having general propositions for society as a whole. Some examples given are the British Maritime League, which campaigned to fight naval cuts, the Anti-Apartheid movement and the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (Alderman 1984 p.41-43). The main problem with this analysis is that although there are some groups which straddle the normal promotional/representative border in general it is best perhaps to differentiate between groups that speak for a constituency and try to represent as many of that constituency as possible (i.e. representative groups) and groups that are often small and made up of sympathetic but uninvolved people (i.e. promotional groups). It is because of possible confusion between different uses of the terms "sectional" and "cause" that this study has adopted the terms "representational" and "promotional".

terms of power, resources and acceptability (see below), it is legitimate to argue that all these groups represent and are open to a certain section of society.

The other type of pressure group is the promotional pressure group, which speaks on behalf of a clientele (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.86). This kind of group is composed of people sharing a similar set of values (Potter 1961 p.25) and is open to anyone who accepts their beliefs and principles (Stewart as quoted in Jordan and Richardson 1987 p.19). These groups can operate within a political party like the Fabian Society or be non-partisan like the CPAG or Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA). They can be long-standing and multi-purpose or short-term and single issue (Hall et al. 1975 p.92). They tend to deal with issues that require a wider debate in the country. Most of the demands of these groups require changes in legislation and/or a significant appreciation in government expenditure (Jordan and Richardson 1987 p.21).

Not all groups fit neatly into the categories of representational and promotional. Some like DIG and Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) consisted both of the section of society affected and sympathisers, although CARD moved towards a purely representational group during the 1960s (Heineman 1972). Therefore, it would be more accurate to think of representational and promotional groups as being on a continuum. CPAG, as a pressure group, however, was firmly on the promotional end of the continuum (see chapters 3 and 4).

2.1.2 Aims

The second main divide is between pressure groups that concentrate on providing services for their members or their client group and those lobbying for change.¹⁶ However many lobbying groups provide services and many service groups occasionally lobby. Once again, therefore, a continuum of pure lobbying to pure service groups with most groups in between is a more useful way of conceptualising them (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.26). Most primarily service groups lobby government because the problem with which they deal needs the government's intervention. Lobbying groups offer services for three main reasons.

A general reason is to secure and maintain support by offering a number of benefits. According to Salisbury¹⁷ there is a distinction between the group's entrepreneur and its members or customers. The entrepreneur invests in a set of benefits that s/he then offers to the potential members at a price, i.e. joining the group (Salisbury 1969 p.1). The benefits may be *material*, in that they are "tangible rewards of goods or services" (Salisbury 1969 p.15) or *solidary* and "derive ...from the acts of association and include such rewards as socialising, congeniality ... and conviviality" (Clark and Wilson as quoted in Salisbury 1969 p.16). *Expressive* rewards are those that "give expression to the interests or values of a person or a group" (Salisbury 1969 p.16). The balance he argues must be maintained between the benefits for the members and the "profit" of the entrepreneur (Salisbury 1969 p.1). The profit may either be economic or have sufficient expressive value to warrant the continuation of the group. A group is most likely to be strong and gain members during affluent periods and lose members during non-affluent periods. The entrepreneur will take account of this and offer incentives to members in "quiet times".

One would expect that people join a promotional group because they believe in the aims of the group. However people join groups for a variety of reasons and expect a number of things from them. There are obviously expressive benefits to be obtained from a promotional group such as legislative victory. These benefits cannot be measured in material terms but give the member a sense of satisfaction. There are also often solidary benefits from socialising at meetings.¹⁸ In addition most promotional groups also offer material benefits. The benefit is often merely a newsletter or journal which updates the member on the group's activities and is important in maintaining the members' interest. Affluent times for a promotional group may be related to the economic situation but are more likely to be related to the general interest in the issue at that time.

¹⁶ Grant has a similar typology which he terms primary (i.e. lobbying groups) and secondary (i.e. service groups) (Grant 1995 p.10-11).

¹⁷ Salisbury conclusions are based on his "exchange theory of interest groups" his work on agricultural groups in the nineteenth century.

¹⁸ Grant (1995 p.10) quotes from Jordan, Maloney and McLaughlin the example of the Aberdeen branch of the United Nations Association. The official poster stated "Join the UN and put the world back together again." The local branch had added "Drink wine! Meet new people!" A classic case of the mixing of expressive and solidary benefits.

A second reason for offering services is to procure information and data on their key issues and activities. Hence CPAG and the Low Pay Unit provided advice services to their client groups and fed the information gathered back into their lobbying work. A final reason, which is only applicable to groups reliant on grants, is that grants for pioneering service work are often more forthcoming than grants for less tangible lobbying work.

2.1.3 Status and Strategy

A third divide between pressure groups is their relationship with the government. Whiteley and Winyard differentiate between status and strategy. A group can be acceptable or unacceptable. It may be unacceptable to the government and Whitehall either for technical reasons (lack of political sophistication) or for political reasons (their belief that the government and political system cannot effect change) (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.31-2). In terms of strategy, a group can be *focused* solely on Whitehall or it can use a variety of institutions in what they term an *open* strategy (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.32).

Grant, however, does not distinguish between the strategy and status of groups. Instead he offers a continuum which distinguishes between different types of insider and outsider groups. This is useful because two groups defined as insider by Whiteley and Winyard may have very different levels of contact with the government and Whitehall. The Grant model is summarised below (Grant 1995 p.20):

Fig.1: *Typography of Pressure Groups*

Insider Groups	Prisoner	Rely on the government for funding, staff and accommodation.
	Low-Profile Insider	Work mostly within Whitehall.
	High Profile Insider	Still close to the government but seeking also to cultivate public opinion to reinforce dialogue with the government.
Outsider Groups	Potential Insider	Have the capacity to become insider groups.
	Outsider Groups by Necessity	Do not have the political sophistication to be insider groups although they may desire it.
	Ideological outsider Groups	Reject the existing political system believing that no meaningful change can be achieved through it.

A variation on the idea of acceptability and unacceptability is the concept of policy communities first developed by Richardson and Jordan (1979). Different departments have their own client groups that are stable (Richardson and Jordan 1979 p.44, Grant 1995 p.35). Richardson and Jordan argued that far from increasing democracy these groups exclude the general public from any influence on policy (Richardson and Jordan 1979 p.174). However Jordan has more recently concluded that as the threshold for entry onto Whitehall consultation lists is low, most groups who wish insider status can achieve it (Jordan *et al* 1992 in Grant 1995 p.21). Yet Grant draws attention to the fact that although the threshold to entry might be low for the peripheral groups that are sent circulars, the thresholds for the inner circle of the policy community are much higher (Grant 1995 p.21).

The strategy of pressure groups depends on where they lie on the Grant continuum. However, for high profile insider groups and outsider groups there are a large number of other institutions to target. The amount of importance attached to the various target institutions (or targets as Whiteley and Winyard refer to them) is different for each type of group. The government and Whitehall are obvious targets for all insider groups. For low profile groups they are the only targets. Within Whitehall there are two power structures: the political power structure of ministers and the administrative power structure of civil servants. A professional or industry group will probably talk to civil servants, the nature of its

goals being of little interest to the public (Grant 1995 p.14). However a promotional group will probably wish to talk to ministers. Firstly, this is for the benefit of the pressure group's members, who want to see the group having contact with those in power and for a higher profile in the press (Grant 1995 p.61-2). Secondly, as promotional groups are concerned with a cause that may well be controversial, it is important to speak with the Minister who will have to take the political lead and support policy through Cabinet and Parliament.

Membership of a policy community can be very useful. Pressure groups in a policy community are able to gain information on policy before the proposals are published in a green or white paper.¹⁹ It is at this stage easier to persuade the Minister to change his/her plans, than when they are in the public domain (Grant 1995 p.57). High profile groups, through choice, and outsider groups, through necessity, lobby a range of other targets: Parliament, the media, other pressure groups, the TUC and Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the courts, political parties and local government (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.88 and Grant 1995 pp. 66-97).

2.2 The Origins of Pressure Groups

2.2.1 Theoretical Models

When discussing why and how pressure groups operated in the 1960s it is imperative to ask why they formed in the first place. What kinds of social, economic and political developments made it necessary or appropriate for such groups to form? This section will summarise and examine the relevant models put forward by various authorities. The models that are to be discussed are: the "Beer-Eckstein" model, the "Bentley-Truman" model and the "Almond-Powell" model,²⁰ and "group replacement".

¹⁹ Green papers have been used since the 1970s to outline the government's plans on a certain issue, often with several alternatives. Interested parties are encouraged to produce evidence and arguments in favour of or against certain alternatives. White papers are a clearer declaration of the government's intentions and although there is still some room for consultation, it is not as great as with a green paper.

²⁰ These names are the ones adopted by Whiteley and Winyard (1987). Salisbury (1969) discusses all the same groups, except the Beer Eckstein model. However he uses different names. Whiteley and Winyard also include Salisbury's model of an "exchange theory of interests", but that has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

2.2.1.1 The Beer-Eckstein Model

Beer argues that "each party when seeking power must bid for the votes of many of the same customer groups and when in power must bargain with most of the same producer groups....Together they have worked to promote a certain *convergence* of the party programs (sic), lessening the ideological distance between Socialist and Conservative. With ideological contours fading, a new group politics appeared as a more and more prominent feature of the political scene" (Beer 1982 p.407-408). As a result, politics had become less about fundamental ideological differences and more about technical details and more centred on Whitehall than Westminster. The government therefore needed the help of certain producer groups to help it administer the system. This theory is not very useful for understanding why promotional groups such as the CPAG were formed. The government does not need the help of these groups to implement policy, although it might rely on them for specialist information. However Beer's observations that political consensus led to the formation of pressure groups can be elaborated upon.

The period after the Second World War up to the middle of the 1970s was marked by the commitment of successive governments to full employment. This had been a key assumption of the Beveridge report but most importantly both parties considered that a return to the mass unemployment of the 1930s would be an electoral disaster. This strengthened the Trade Union Movement, leading also to a stronger assertion of employers' interests and the setting up of the CBI. By 1965, these strong interest groups as well as multiple other business, professional and workers' interests forced the political parties to temper their own beliefs and values in order to work with them. The fact that different governments had to work with the same interest groups in order to deliver policy actually contributed to the post war consensus. The scramble for floating voters also pushed both main political parties to the centre of the political spectrum and this isolated the extremes of both Left and Right from the parties proper. There were differences within the main parties as well as between them (Gladstone 1995 p.14).

It is suggested that groups such as the CPAG developed because the members felt that the Labour Party would avoid even moderate vertical redistribution of income

and wealth unless it was pressured. More extreme were groups such as the CUs, whose demands for a considerable reorganisation of society had little chance in a middle class-friendly Labour Party. The authors of the *May Day Manifesto* in 1968 certainly believed this to be the case and argued that to stop the Left splintering into single cause groups there would have to be a realignment on the Left (Tiratsoo 1993 p.165). On the Right similar trends can be traced with the setting up of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in 1955. As the Conservatives broadly supported the welfare state and Keynesian control of the economy, those committed to the market became more isolated and moved to groups outside the Conservative Party.

This model does beg the question of whether there ever really was a consensus between the two major political parties in the period from the Second World War until the 1970s. Whiteside argues that the reason why the Conservatives were said not to have "unpicked" the welfare state is because the definition of the welfare state was formed with hindsight (Whiteside 1996 p.84-5). She argues that Labour would have forged a long-term link between the welfare state and official wage guidelines (Whiteside 1996 p.93), controlling the prices of food and housing, in return for trade union co-operation in restricting wage demands (Whiteside 1996 p.87-8). The Conservatives rejected this for freer markets in wages and their separation from benefits. (Whiteside 1996 p.94-6). However, Labour reduced food subsidies and the Conservatives remained committed to full employment (Whiteside 1996 p.86). There were obviously clear differences between Labour and the Conservatives on the important issues of the welfare state and full employment but these were a matter of degree not principle.

2.2.1.2 The Bentley-Truman Model

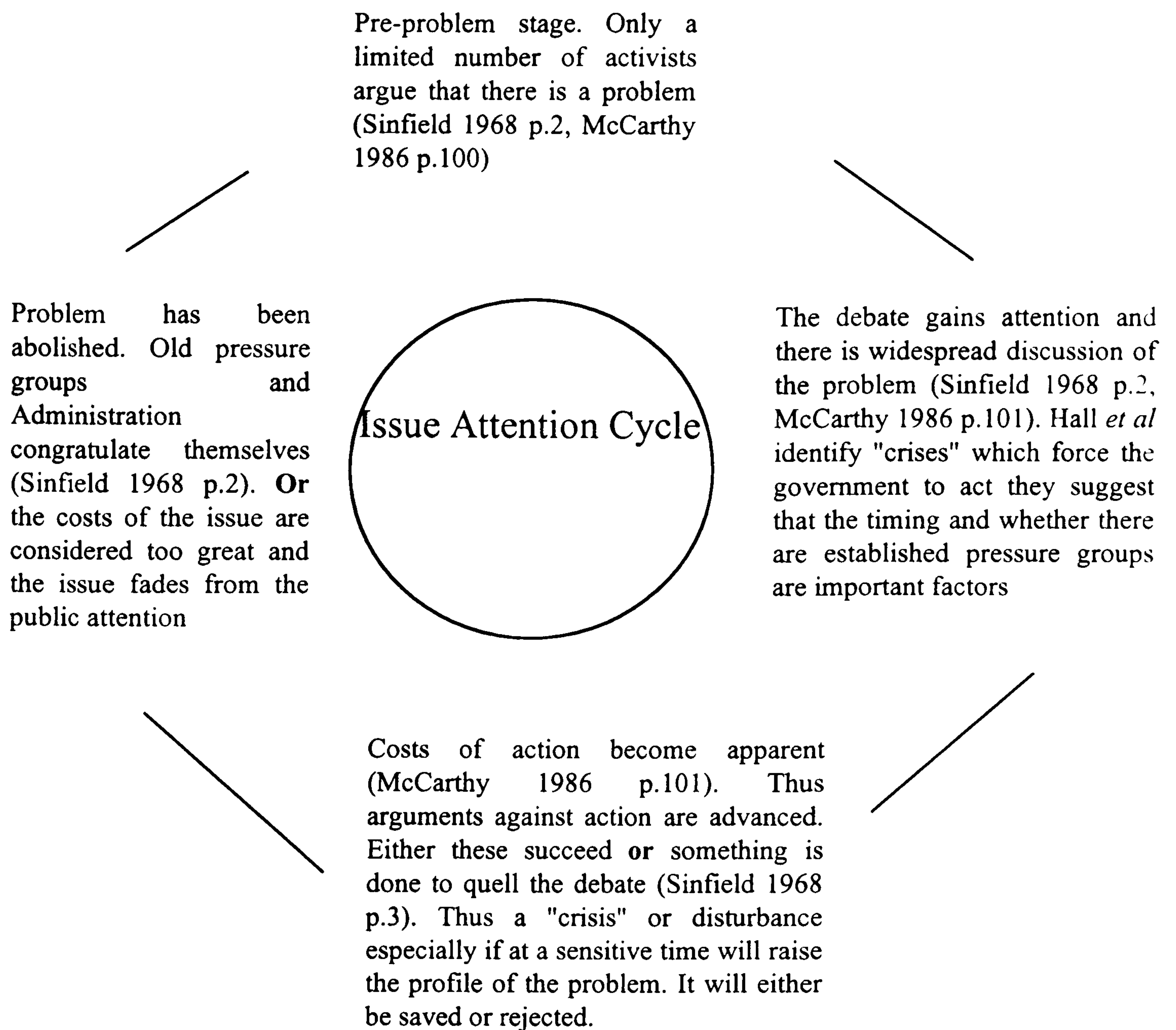
The Bentley-Truman model advances the argument that pressure groups are caused by some disturbance in the social and political equilibrium. According to its main advocate, Truman, there are not only organised groups in society but also latent groups. When there is a disruption to the social equilibrium, those latent groups that are affected will organise "to restore a viable balance" (Salisbury 1969 p.5). The disturbance could be something as dramatic as a war, demographic change, a change in society's values, technological innovation or industrialisation

(Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.39-40, Salisbury 1969 p.5). The development of new organisations should then occur in "waves" as the break in the equilibrium causes latent groups to emerge (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.48, Salisbury 1969 p.5).

A similar thesis is that advanced by Hall *et al* (1975). They identify "crises" which can force a government to act on an issue. However whether a issue becomes a "crisis" is dependent on other factors (Hall *et al* 1975 p.492-3). The first is timing. If the "crisis" occurs near a general election or if there is widespread interest in and information about the "crisis" act, then there will be more pressure on the government to act (Hall *et al* 1975 p.494). In addition, if there is an established pressure group to force attention onto the issue, action is more likely to occur (Hall *et al* 1975 p.495).

This observation of Hall *et al* is explained by the Downs's Issue Attention Cycle (McCarthy 1986) and Sinfield's Poverty Research Cycle (Sinfield 1968). There are slight differences in emphasis between the two. Sinfield is more confident than Downs that some temporary concession will be made by the government. However essentially the important message of both is that the attention an issue attracts is only temporary:

Fig. 2: The Issue Cycle



2.2.1.3 The Almond-Powell Model

The third model offered is called the proliferation hypothesis by Salisbury. This derives from structural-functionalism and its main proponents are Almond and Powell. As society modernises and undergoes "processes of economic and technological change, and acquires the social and attitudinal concomitants of these processes, both the orientations and the means of action which lead to higher levels of political interest articulation will emerge." (Almond and Powell p.96-97). Therefore, society's modernisation will create more differentiation in the labour market and politics. Thus as unorganised interests are perceived to be weaker than organised ones, most groups will organise. (Salisbury 1969 p.4) In short, the

reason for group development is to be found in the underlying developments of a modernising society.

2.2.1.4 Group Replacement

The final suggestion for explaining why groups form is group replacement. This suggests that sometimes groups that are interested in an issue cannot pursue it openly. This may be due to the fact that they are themselves a prisoner group or that political activities would bring disrepute to the group (such as in the case of religious groups). Instead a new group is formed to take control of the political activities. This situation will be discussed in relation to the CPAG in the next chapter. It is also worth pointing out that both Action For World Development (AWD) and Shelter were set up as a coalition of other groups, which in both cases contained church groups (Young 1975 p.26-7, Frost and Henderson 1975 p.59). AWD proved to be so political that it had to convert from being a charity to being a Trust (Young 1975 p.27). Certainly some of the groups that had set up AWD, such as the Catholic Institute For International Relations, Christian Aid and Oxfam (to name but a few), could not have been so overtly political.

2.2.2 Explaining Group Formation In The 1960s

How appropriate are the above theories to groups which were formed in the mid 1960s and after? As this thesis is particularly concerned with social policy single issue pressure groups this question is answered by reference to them. However because of the dearth of a detailed literature on social policy pressure groups, references, where relevant, are also made to groups outside social policy. This section finally discusses how the new pressure groups of the 1960s were different to those that had preceded them and ask how the older pressure groups changed.

In the 1960s, there was an exodus from the Labour Party. Individual membership of the Labour Party grew rapidly after the Second World War and by 1952 had reached a peak of over one million individual members. Apart from a rise in 1963-4, which was natural in an election year, the membership of the Labour Party declined through the 1950s and 1960s. (See appendix C). This development did not go unnoticed at the time. In a 1970 Fabian pamphlet, Tony Benn argued that the Labour Party was losing support from many of those who would have once

been its members but were now involved in various groups. He argued that "the majority, being the expression of human values against oppression by authority and the system of centralised power would be natural allies if we could only discover the right sort of relationship with them ... each side has its own part to play in the process of socialist construction" (Benn 1970 p.9). Therefore Benn recognised that potential and traditional Labour supporters were becoming active outside of the Party and this was a fact that the Labour Party would have to accept. Similar ideas were expressed at the 1972 Labour Party Conference (Labour Party 1972 p.309). One activist argued that he left the Labour Party in 1964 because there was not "much power or significance in individual membership any longer." He went on to say that the "working class commitment to social change didn't dry up or get diverted into hedonistic self-interest. It simply changed form." According to him, the new voluntary action was "less about 'flag days' and the home visiting of the poor by the leisured religious wealthy. It [wa]s more and more about self organisation and mutual aid" (Warpole 1981 p.199).

So had the socialist support that once had been channelled into the Labour Party shifted to the new voluntary organisations, as politically active people began to take more direct action? Was this the reason for the drop in individual membership? Certainly, the Labour Party had been the vehicle for socialist aspirations since the beginning of the century. In 1964 active members worked for a Labour victory believing that a Labour government would be the answer to the "thirteen wasted years²¹" of Conservative rule. However, a lot of the new pressure groups were on the political Left. In many cases the campaigners combined their work for the pressure group with their support for the Labour Party (or in some cases one of the other main or minor political parties). CPAG and Shelter were disappointed that the new Labour government had not placed the poor and those in slums as their top priority.²²

Thus, a shift from using the political party system to using pressure groups to achieve political goals is therefore detectable. It is important here to stress that the

²¹ A gibe made by the Labour Party in 1984 about that period (Hill 1995 p.61)

²²It should be stressed that not all the supporters of the social policy pressure groups of the 1960s were Labour supporters, CPAG attracted support from a number of Conservative front bench MPs.

change was really only in the social policy sector, where new lobbying groups such as the CPAG, DIG and Shelter emerged in the 1960s. In the area of "moral policy" such as abortion, homosexuality and death penalty the main thrust of the debate for change had for many years come from single issue pressure groups because these issues were always ones of conscience rather than party politics. Moreover, this shift away from political parties and established organisations was not confined to Britain. Inglehart argues that it was common all over Western Europe and North America. He argues that in America from the mid 1960s that there was a shift in the younger and better educated from what he terms elite-directed groups like trade unions or political parties that have established hierarchies to more *ad hoc* single issue élite-challenging groups (Inglehart 1977 p.299-301).

There was also the emergence of new and the re-emergence of old issues at this time. Poverty was rediscovered (see chapter 3.1). The problems of homelessness and slum housing were rediscovered. The television film *Cathy Come Home*, in November 1966, focused attention on the problems of families finding suitable accommodation. Demographic change meant that the absolute numbers and relative proportion in the population of the elderly and disabled increased throughout the post war period. Likewise changes in moral values meant that there were growing numbers of single mothers. The disabled and single mothers had been bequeathed of benefits by the Beveridge welfare state that helped them not on the basis of need but on the circumstances, which had led to their situation.²³

At the same time there was a development of professions potentially interested in the problems of socially excluded groups. Professional, paid social workers were not an innovation of the post war period. Social workers had been trained since the end of the nineteenth century and some were paid (Younghusband 1981 p.14,19,22). However, there were two important changes that occurred after the war. Firstly, although until the 1960s the child care departments of many local authorities were still staffed by untrained social workers, trained social workers started to be employed in large numbers (Younghusband 1981 p.26, Gladstone

²³The disabled had been left with a lottery of benefits. Whilst those disabled in war or industry were entitled to pensions, the civilian disabled had to rely on NA. In the case of single mothers the Beveridge welfare state provided for widows but not for divorcees and unmarried mothers who were forced to rely on NA.

1995 p.39) and much larger numbers were trained during the 1960s (Younghusband 1981 p.33) The second change was that social work training became more generic. In 1967 more generic social workers were trained in Further Education colleges than specialists (Cmnd 3707 p.337). Training for social workers became more important as they strove to be recognised as a profession, the local authorities wanted professions to protect their reputation of high standards and the clients demanded that the social worker was trained (McDougall 1957 p.14). It was in the 1960s that social work as a profession was officially separated from ancillary care work (Younghusband 1981 p.27). Thus social work as a profession grew in the 1950s and 1960s

The Robbins Report on higher education recommended a 59% expansion of higher education. This was far exceeded. Between 1962-3 and 1967-8 the number of students in full time higher education increased by more than in the past twenty-five years (Lapping 1970 p.178). Higher education did not just expand. The social science departments grew and by 1969-70, the social science faculties of universities were attracting a fifth of all students (CSO 1971 p.122). This expansion in higher education meant that there was a need for more academics. In addition the new universities such as Essex had specialist Departments of Sociology. The older universities during the 1960s followed this example. Thus during the 1960s there were increasingly more academics and particularly social science academics.

A significant development was the rise in the number of social workers and social administration academics during this period. If the Almond-Powell thesis is correct then these groups would organise in order to protect their sectional interests. This they did. However these were also two groups that worked with the disadvantaged. Therefore, a minority of both groups organised to work on behalf of their client groups in promotional groups. Three quarters of those involved in CPAG during its first year were from one of these two groups (see appendix D). The division of labour produced groups of which a minority of members would act as promoters of their clients' interests.

However the church too was interested in social issues. It was a number of church groups that had set up Shelter and some of the aid lobby. Also individual clergy

were involved in the campaign to decriminalise homosexuality (Grey 1975 p.45). The Society of Friends' Social and Economic Affairs Committee was also important in the setting up of the CPAG (see 3.2). It is difficult to say that the churches became more involved in social problems in the post war period but the churches believed that the government had a responsibility to its citizens and therefore set up pressure groups like Shelter to campaign on their behalf.

Thus as predicted by the revised Beer-Eckstein model the shifting of both the main political parties to the centre in the 1950s and 1960s, alienating the extreme wings of the main parties. At the same time the expansion of social science academia and social work meant that there were professional groups interested in the socially excluded. However a minority of both groups also organised into groups to promote the case of their clients. These two underlying developments meant that when there was a disturbance in the social equilibrium such as the rediscovery of poverty, the latent groups were motivated into action.

Single issue pressure groups were not an invention of the 1960s. For example, the ALRA had grown up in the 1930s and the Howard League and the Anti Corn Law League were products of the nineteenth century. In the 1930s the National Spinsters Pension Association (NSPA) and the National Federation of Old Age Pensioners Associations (NFOAPA) emerged as large, democratic, representational groups demanding universal pensions.²⁴ Yet they remained outsider groups mostly because their demands were unrealistic (Macnicol 1999a p.316, 317, 322). The Family Endowment Society (FESoc) formed in 1917 to campaign for family allowances was promotional and its supporters were experts. It was able to enter the policy community and had influential supporters.²⁵ Yet FESoc was reliant on its founder for leadership and funding, making the group fundamentally unstable (Macnicol 1980 p.26). A pressure group, hoping for success, will temper its demands for different audiences and ensure that they are realistic. FESoc, although "committed to the principle of direct provision for the family", was not committed to any "specific scheme" (Land 1975 p.166).

²⁴ The NSPA could claim in 1938 140,000 members. The NFOAPA claimed (doubtfully) two million in 1940 (Macnicol 1999 p.312 and 319). This should be compared to CPAG which had 2050 members on September 25 1971 (Director's Report September 1971, CPAG Minutes file 5, box 65). In 1970 between 5,000 and 6,500 were branch members of DIG and 1,300 were individual members (Frost 1975 p.87).

²⁵ Beveridge, the architect of the Beveridge report, and Keynes, the economist (during the Second World War he was advisor to the Chancellor of the Exchequer) supported FESoc.

However many of the strategies used by CPAG and other 1960s groups had been used before by other groups.²⁶

2.3 *Measuring the Effectiveness of CPAG: A Theoretical Model*

2.3.1 What is Effectiveness and How Can it be Measured?

A civil servant told the researchers, Whiteley and Winyard, that in his view CPAG was a very effective pressure group (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.126). However before accepting this as an evaluation of CPAG's performance, it is reasonable to ask on what criteria this conclusion was founded. The dictionary defines something as effective "if it produces the results that it is intended to" (Procter 1995 p.443). Therefore if CPAG achieved everything that they had set out to achieve, then it was wholly effective. Yet CPAG might not achieve everything it wished to but instead have met some of its goals or made significant progress. To what extent was it then effective? CPAG's objectives might have changed over time and new issues have become important to the group. This section lays out a framework for evaluating CPAG at two levels: efficiency and effectiveness. CPAG will be assessed as to how efficiently it used the resources available to it (see section 2.3.2), how successful it was perceived to be in the various areas of its work and finally how effectively it was able to achieve its own goals.

Most pressure group analyses have steered away from the question of effectiveness.²⁷ Whiteley and Winyard's study was the first to construct a model of pressure group effectiveness (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.125-135). This was later adapted and used by Grant (1995 p.131-147). The model looks at three (four in Grant) main aspects of pressure group structure and activity: the social, political and economic environment; the internal resources and structure of the group and the strategies of the group. Grant adds a fourth category, which he calls domain organisation. Another relevant model is that put forward by Hall *et al* (1975). This model based on a large number of case studies examines the success of issues²⁸ and offers a number of concepts with which to evaluate the likely success of an issue (Hall *et al* 1975 p.475-507).

²⁶ For a fuller discussion of this topic see Kelly (2000)

²⁷ E.g. Pym 1974, Kimber and Richardson 1974, Alderman 1984, Frost 1975, Ryan 1978.

²⁸ An umbrella term used by them to refer to problems, which could be tackled by the government.

These models however do not construct a framework for directly assessing effectiveness but efficiency. The models allow the social scientist to audit the resources available to the pressure group and evaluate how efficiently it was able to use those resources. Assessments as to the success and effectiveness of the pressure group are enriched by this analysis, which allows the success of the group to be compared with the resources available to it. The available efficiency models are combined below in 2.3.2 into one efficiency model.

2.3.2 Efficiency

2.3.2.1 The Political, Social and Economic Environment

2.3.2.1.1 The Political Environment

Politically there are five core points. Firstly, the culture and interaction of the basic legislative, administrative and judicial systems means that there is a fundamental political structure in which the pressure group has to work long term (Whitely and Winyard 1987 p.127). Sometimes there are radical changes at this level. However for the most part real changes in the culture of the institutions are evolutionary. Secondly, the party in power can matter. Although the ideological politics of Thatcherism was yet to arrive, there were ideological differences between the parties' priorities (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.125, Grant 1995 p.146). How did the change of government from Labour to Conservative affect CPAG's campaign? The size of the government's majority in the Commons is also of importance. Between 1964-1966 Harold Wilson had a tiny majority and his ability to push controversial legislation through the Commons was hampered. After 1966 both the Wilson and Heath governments had safe majorities. Thirdly, the competing claims on the government from other pressure groups may or may not have favoured CPAG. Fourthly, CPAG had to convince the government that the issue was one with which it was legitimate for it to become involved (Hall et al 1975 p.475-7). Finally, it was up to CPAG to prove that its solutions were feasible in terms of financial, time and staff resources (Hall et al 1975 p.479-483). Were CPAG able to make their policies feasible?

2.3.2.1.2 Social

Highly relevant to the political strategy is public opinion (politicians are always worried in a democracy about their popularity with voters). How close a group is to the prevalent culture norms of the society in which it operates affects its success with the media and its position on the insider/outsider continuum. This issue is discussed further in chapter 8.2. Whiteley and Winyard point out that an attractive clientele group and cause is an important political resource in itself (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.131). The government will make its own assessment of the issue being advanced by the pressure groups. Issues, which attract widespread approval will add to the government's stock of *support*, those with widespread disapproval will have the opposite effect. However the situation is complicated by the fact that only a small proportion of those potentially affected will make their views known. Thus what is relevant is what the government perceives to be the weight of public opinion. Finally sheer numbers do not necessarily affect the government's fortunes. Instead the views of those that if disaffected will vote for the Opposition and in some cases those in marginal constituencies weigh heavier in the government's calculations (Hall *et al* 1975 p.484).

2.3.2.1.3 Economic

The economic environment is crucial. What a government would like to do and what it can do given the economic circumstances are two very different realities (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.126). As chapter 1.4.3 described throughout the Labour and Conservative administrations there were severe economic problems. To what degree was CPAG able to adapt its policies to the economic situation?

2.3.2.2 Strategies

The strategies adopted by a group are dependent on where it lies in Grant's pressure group continuum (see chapter 2.1.3). Whereas a low profile insider group will concentrate its energies on Whitehall, a high profile insider group will utilise a larger number of targets. Outsider groups will make little use of Whitehall. The reason for the choice of strategy is dependent on three main factors. Firstly, the issue itself can influence the strategies taken. Some issues need a wide political debate, others are more technical and attract little Parliamentary or public interest. The same pressure group might adopt a high profile for some issues and a lower profile one for other issues. Was this the case for CPAG? Secondly, the support

of the group and its ideology will determine whether a group is able to muster the expertise to become a valuable member of the policy community, whether it has populist appeal or whether it stands aloof from Whitehall. The issue itself and how it was presented was important to the success of CPAG's campaign. *Hall et al* argue that a policy has to be *feasible* in terms of resources, it should also increase the *support* for the government of key electoral, Parliamentary, industrial groups (*Hall et al* 1975 p.479-485)

2.3.2.3 Internal Factors

There are four main areas in which internal factors are relevant. Firstly, the internal structure of the group is important. There are advantages and disadvantages of choosing a democratic or authoritarian system (Grant 1995 p.135-6). Did CPAG adopt the most effective structure for its group? In addition, there is the question of how closely the structure on paper corresponds with that in reality. Secondly, not only must a promotional group like CPAG attract members, it must also hold on to them. The price of joining and leaving the group is low and thus turnover can be high (Grant 1995 p.137). Was this the case for CPAG and if so did it affect CPAG's efficiency and thus effectiveness?

Thirdly, there are the political resources of the group. As a promotional group builds its reputation on its information the quality of its research and information is crucial (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.131). The prestige of the members and staff of the group is an advantage to a pressure group wishing to sell its arguments. The activism and commitment of ordinary members are an asset (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.132). The group's ability to work with other groups may either be an advantage or it may divert resources from the richer group and damage its carefully constructed reputation (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.133). In addition an issue may be better promoted on its own or linked with other issues (*Hall et al* 1975 p.486-9).

Fourthly, although a rich group is not necessarily more effective, all groups need finance. The ability of the group to attract funding from various different sources, hence not making it too dependent on any one source, is important to its sustained success. It has been argued that to be effective a group needs between six and

eight members of staff (Buksti and Johanson 1979 p.209-10). However, there is a case for quality as well as quantity of staff (Grant 1995 p.139)

2.3.2.4 Domain Organisation

In relation to cause groups, Grant's category of domain organisation consists of two different strands of how a group organises itself. Firstly, there is the issue of how much the group must compete with other similar groups for members, finance and attention (Grant 1995 p.132). Yet whereas a sectional group will be in competition with rivals for membership, for cause groups there is a great deal of overlapping membership. 73.5% of Amnesty International and 65.8% of Friends of the Earth members belong to another cause group. The costs of multiple group membership are low and the amount of activity expected small. Secondly, a group has to make a decision as to whether it is to be promotional or representational. Certainly, this decision is dependent on how the group formed but a group of radicals has to make a decision as to whether they are going to speak on behalf of the client group or if they are going to organise the client group.

2.3.3 Evaluating Effectiveness

The model above measures how efficiently CPAG used the resources available to it. This section offers a framework in which the effectiveness of CPAG is evaluated. Effectiveness will be assessed in two different ways. Firstly, the extent to which CPAG was able to achieve the objectives it set itself, especially those it saw as a priority. Secondly, the extent to which CPAG was perceived to be effective by those in power. There will be a summary, which brings together these different measures of efficiency and effectiveness.

The evaluation of the extent to which CPAG was able to achieve its objectives can be measured at two levels. Effectiveness should be seen very much as operating at two levels. Hall *et al* argue "it is more difficult to show convincingly that one solution is markedly superior to another than to shame governments into taking some action by the revelation of intolerable conditions" (Hall *et al* 1975 p.505). A group might be able to show at one level that there is a problem and persuade the government that there is a problem, which deserves its attention. However, it is yet another achievement to persuade the government not only that there is a

problem, deserving of it attention, but also the solution offered by the group will be the most efficient and effective way of dealing with that problem. Thus, this study will evaluate effectiveness at both these levels.

The analysis is made more difficult because of two fundamental problems associated with firstly, the way in which evidence is recorded and available and secondly, the nature of policy-making itself. There is a deficiency of clear information about how decisions are taken and what was the actual influence of the pressure group. This study was more fortunate than previous studies on CPAG because the government records are available until 1969 and there is a wealth of information in other archives. However, this does not mean that it is possible to identify which decisions were due to CPAG influence. If CPAG was really successful, its arguments should have been internalised by the civil servants and politicians and treated as their own ideas. Also minutes of meetings leave little information about debates in which CPAG ideas may have been mentioned. Discussion between policy-makers sometimes happened in private and thus no records were kept. Part of this deficiency in the documentary information (and even more so for the period when the documents are still closed), can be filled with oral testimony from policy-makers and CPAG staff and members.

Political analysts agree that policy-making is a multi-faceted process which involves many different actors. Decisions are usually the result of pressure from more than one source. Therefore, it is difficult to argue that it was exclusively because of CPAG that family allowances were raised. As Hollis points out "positive legislation... is likely to have a pedigree of its own, independent of pressure from without" (Hollis 1974 p.24). Thus, it is not possible to attribute a success purely to CPAG as CPAG will only have been one pressure amongst several. This means that ultimately any assessment of success based on these criteria can only be an informed judgement.

Whiteley and Winyard attempted to by-pass the problem of measuring effectiveness by using the views of a number of pressure group staff, activists and policy-makers. As their study was a comparative study of the whole poverty lobby, they compared the evaluations of effectiveness with the types of pressure groups. From this they deduced that promotional groups were more effective than

representative, acceptable more effective than unacceptable and that open groups were more effective than focused (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.128-135). However, Whiteley and Winyard were uncritical of the pressure group respondents' claims of successes. The PWFO took the credit for the provisions of travel grants for prisoners' wives (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.115). However, the role of CPAG, particularly under Tony Lynes, in pushing for this change cannot be discounted (see chapter 6.4). This method does have the problem of pushing the difficulty of untangling influences in a multi-faceted policy-making process onto the respondents. At the time of Whiteley and Winyard's research many of the respondents were still in the same or similar jobs. They therefore had an incentive to suggest that their groups were effective. As with all oral testimony problems of hindsight affect the views expressed.

However, the views of witnesses do add another dimension to the evaluation of effectiveness and success. The profile of a pressure group is greatly enhanced by reputation. If CPAG was thought of as an important group by those in power then this added to its ability to apply pressure on the government or on the institutions which it thought would be able to pressure government. Thus, this method is used as the second measure of effectiveness.

3 Chapter Three: The Origins of the CPAG.

The CPAG was a product of the society of which it was part. It grew out of number of influences that were both political and social. It was also formed by a nucleus of committed and interested people. This chapter will ask two key questions. Firstly, if the rediscovery of poverty did act as the catalyst for the formation of CPAG, why was poverty rediscovered at this time? Secondly, how can the theories of the origins of pressure groups outlined in 2.2.1 be used specifically to construct an explanation of the origins of CPAG?

3.1 The Emergence of the Issue of Family Poverty

3.1.1 The Abolition of Poverty?

The general mood in Britain after the Second World War was that the broad adoption of the Beveridge plan and the establishment of the new welfare state²⁹ had consigned poverty to the history books. The Labour government in 1950 certainly believed that it had solved "want" with its policies. "Labour has honoured the pledge that it made in 1945 to make social security the birthright of every citizen. Today destitution has been banished" (Labour Party 1950 p8). The Labour Party's boasts were corroborated by Rowntree and Lavers' survey of York in 1950. In contrast to Rowntree's two previous surveys of 1899 and 1936, they found the level of poverty to be negligible. Only 1.7% of the population or 4.6% of households in York were in poverty and over two thirds of them were elderly households (Rowntree 1951 p.31 and 35). In contrast, in 1936 Rowntree had found that 17.7% population were in poverty: a third (32.8%) of this number due to low wages, another 28.6% due to unemployment. The 1950 findings seemed to confirm that poverty amongst those of working age had been abolished. The "rediscovery of poverty" was to shatter these illusions and bring poverty back on to the political agenda.

Throughout the developed world it had been assumed that poverty had been abolished. In America, the richest country in the world, President Eisenhower

²⁹ The definition of the welfare state varies from author to author. However all accounts would agree that the new free comprehensive system of education, the National Health Service, social security and social services made up the core services. Also crucial to the definition of the welfare state at this time were full employment and taxation policy.

assured Americans that poverty was a thing of the past and this was given academic respectability by Galbraith, an economist, who argued that poverty was now only a minority problem (Trattner 1979 p.247). The *New York Times* in 1950 asked what philanthropists should spend their money on now that poverty had been abolished (Murray 1984 p.4). The Left was subdued by McCarthyism. Social work, striving to be a recognised profession, concentrated on "scientific" rather than the structural causes of poverty, which were more sensitive (Trattner 1979 p.248). In other European countries there was a belief that poverty had been eradicated. In France the one national organisation³⁰ allocating funds to combat poverty made it known in 1964 that poverty had been eliminated in France and all further funding for research was wasted. The American sociologist Alvin Schorr found little awareness of the problems of large families and the old in France in 1965 (Sinfield 1968 p.37). In West Germany there was hardly a publication in which the word poverty was mentioned (Münke 1967 p.1). This was also true for other countries (Sinfield 1968 p.35-53).

3.1.2 Why Did the Rediscovery of Poverty Take Place at This Time?

There are three main reasons why poverty was rediscovered at this time. The first turns the question on its head and ask why was poverty ever thought to have been abolished (Sinfield 1974 p.7-8). The second argues that poverty was rediscovered because it was redefined. The third is that at first a small number of researchers in various countries brought the problem, usually with a catalyst, to the attention of the public.

3.1.2.1 Why Was It Believed that Poverty Had Been Abolished?

Poverty was an accepted fact throughout the first half of the twentieth century in Europe. Thus the real question that should be asked is why there was so little interest in the problem after the war? Families had been split up by the war, the bombing and cessation of building made many families homeless and there was a general shortage of food and essential supplies. Yet in America and Europe there was little discussion of poverty. According to Sinfield (1974) there were six reasons common to most European countries which explain why attention was

³⁰ The *Union Nationale des Caisses d'Allocations Familiales* which was an organisation of the French government

distracted from the problem of poverty in the early post war years. Firstly, high unemployment and poverty had been so closely linked in the inter-war years, that the disappearance of the former as a problem meant that the problem of poverty was also assumed to have been solved. Secondly, the expansion of social services and greater number of state benefits in the European countries were accepted as evidence of the state meeting the poor's material needs. Thirdly, the general rise of living standards and the forced rise of benefits in money terms in an era of inflation disguised the inadequacy of many of the benefits. Fourthly, the euphoria of reconstruction and advance from the thirties, as well as certain national achievements e.g. the UK's welfare state, the German economic miracle and the USA's deregulation gave the impression that inequality and poverty had withered away. Fifthly, the cold war itself distracted the attention of politicians, as did decolonisation in Britain and France. Finally, the most obvious poverty was blamed on individual failings, i.e. the problem family (Sinfield 1974 p.7-8).

Contrary to Rowntree's results and Labour's boasts in Britain, families not sharing in post war affluence could be found in every British city (Macnicol 1999b p.72). In a society where "want" had supposedly been eradicated, the individual was blamed. This led to the discourse on the problem family, the family whom post-war affluence had not reached.³¹ The main characteristic of the problem family was said to be the emotional immaturity of the parents, who were said to transfer their problems to an authority figure. However, at the same time they were said to resent authority with infantile defiance (Bodman 1958-9 p.10232). In a period of full employment³³ the problem family frequently had a full time working, male breadwinner³⁴ (Bodman 1958-9 p.102). Illegitimacy was not a sign of a problem family either although high fertility (no definition was given) was a characteristic,

31 The two groups most involved in researching and helping problem families were the now much more reformist Eugenics Society and the Family Service Units (FSU) which had developed from the Pacifist Service Units which had given all families practical help during the war. The emphasis was on casework uncluttered by grand theory (Macnicol 1998 p.12).

32 Bodman was writing in the social work journal *Case Conference* in the late 1950s. What is interesting is that he is writing in the main professional journal for social workers and not a publication of the Eugenics Society. This would suggest the great acceptability of these beliefs at this time to the social work profession.

33 Charles Murray, the leading proponent of the Underclass theory since the 1980s argues that the main indicators of an underclass are illegitimacy, unemployment and crime (Murray 1996 p.28)

34 He would most likely be in a low paid job however and Bodman argues that he was likely to have a job such as a lorry driver so that his contact with the family would be minimal (Bodman 1958-9 p.102).

as well as sexual promiscuity, marital problems, misspending and the sub-normality of the mother. However the factor that the researchers appeared to be most preoccupied with was domestic squalor (Macnicol 1999b p.81-83). Similar constructs emerged in other countries, usually referred to as the culture of poverty (Galbraith 1979 p.249, Sinfield 1968 p.50-2).

The scientific validity of the definition of the problem family was already under strain in Britain by the 1950s. Two sociologists, Baldamus and Timms, showed that problem families expressed belief in the same values, beliefs and orientations as the rest of society, although this was qualified by arguing that the assertions were merely nominative (Baldamus and Timms 1955 p.323). However the fact that problem families shared the wider society's values and beliefs threw doubt on the whole definition. Even Carl Blacker³⁵ agreed that it was difficult to define the problem family (Macnicol 1999b p.88-90). The methodologies used by the researchers of problem families also came under attack. Irvine attacked the eugenicist Carl Blacker's methodology in the classic study *Problem families: Five Enquiries* (1952) as early as 1954 and other researchers such as Donnison were also looking at the problem families debate in a new light (Macnicol 1999b p.88-90). Hence, although the scapegoat of the problem family was not to disappear completely (Lister 1996), its legitimacy was thrown into question.

3.1.2.2 The Redefinition of Poverty

A crucial reason for the rediscovery of poverty must be its redefinition at this time. Rowntree at the turn of the century had essentially attempted to scientifically define a minimum standard of poverty related to physical subsistence needs, with his primary poverty standard. Academics have debated whether Rowntree used relative measures or not (Veit Wilson 1986, 1994, Harris 1998). Although there can be little argument that Rowntree's scale was dynamic to a degree,³⁶ relative to wages Rowntree's scale actually declined from 1936 to 1950 (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.15). The idea that the poor should share in the rising prosperity

³⁵ Secretary of the Eugenics Society

³⁶ There can be little doubt that Rowntree's 1918 Human Needs of Labour and 1936 scales were far more generous than the 1899 scale. The 1950 scale was more generous again. Yet Rowntree and Lavers themselves say in regard to the personal sundries allowance that the 1950 allowance of 6/8 would not buy as much as the 1936 allowance of 3/4 did then (Rowntree and Lavers 1951 p.24). Therefore in real terms there was a decline in this component.

of the post war era gathered pace (Townsend 1954, Townsend 1962, Abel Smith and Townsend 1965). Wilson in her 1964 study noted that those seeking help from the National Assistance Board "...may not look as ragged as they did a generation ago; but compared to the general prosperity of the average family the lives lived by people who are dependent on National Assistance allowances are full of strain and anxiety. In other words poverty is a relative concept" (Wilson 1964 p.6).³⁷ This relative definition of poverty was to be further developed by Townsend (1979 p.50-3) amongst others. It was not just academics that accepted this. Crosland agreed that what are luxuries soon become necessities in the affluent society (Crosland 1957, p.286), Beveridge argued that what is the poverty line changes over time (Beveridge 1942 p.27). In 1959, the Conservatives promised that those on NA would "have a share in the country's increasing prosperity" (Conservative Party 1959 p.3). Therefore a relative approach to poverty gradually became the accepted definition of poverty despite the annoyance of some civil servants (Stacpoole and Beltram in Kelly forthcoming, Runcorn to Sargent³⁸ 30.12.65, AST 31/27 PRO).

3.1.2.3 The Rediscovery of Poverty

The rediscovery of poverty by a small number of academics and social workers was cumulative. In 1954, Townsend questioned the legitimacy of Rowntree's methodology (Townsend 1954). The consensus was strained further when studies showed that several minority groups such as the elderly, widows, fatherless families were living in poverty. (Townsend 1957, Marris 1957 Wedderburn 1962, Marris 1959, Wynn 1964). There was also the start of some investigations into the adequacy of benefits. A study in Bristol showed that long term dependency on benefits meant relative and absolute poverty (Shaw 1958). Tony Lynes³⁹ demonstrated that the both NA and National Insurance (NI) benefits had not risen in line with the cost of living as defined by his low income index, thus demonstrating that the poor had not had their share of rising national prosperity.

³⁷ Interestingly, and contrary to how Abel-Smith and Townsend would argue in *The Poor and The Poorest*, she argued that Rowntree himself recognised this. His scales became more generous over time to adapt to the new standards of living (p.7-8). The argument whether Rowntree was relativist or not has continued to the present day (Veit Wilson 1986, Harris 1998).

³⁸ Secretary to the NAB

³⁹ One of the so called Titmice, a group of academics around Richard Titmuss who were heavily involved in researching poverty and inequality in the welfare state.

(Lynes 1962). The Society of Friends' Social and Economic Affairs Committee (SEAC), in a pamphlet argued that family poverty, defined relatively (see below for discussion) was still a major problem (Wilson 1964 p.4-6) and that higher family allowances and wages were needed to tackle the problem, (Wilson 1964 p.21-22) not social casework (Wilson 1964 p.18-19). At the same time a nutritional study showed that large families had declining nutritional standards (Lambert 1964, as quoted in Lynes 1965).

One of the most influential publications in this rediscovery of poverty was *Casualties of the Welfare State* written by CAB worker, who had worked in London's East End. In this Fabian tract, Audrey Harvey pointed to those left behind in the period of rising affluence. "...Such people are not representative of the working class in general, and although they are certainly to be counted in millions, they form only a small minority of the working class as a whole." (Harvey 1960 p.1). The pamphlet described the client-unfriendly nature of the NAB offices (Harvey 1960 p.3), the stigma attached to claimants (Harvey 1960 p.8), the loopholes in the NI law (Harvey 1960 p.5) and the fallacy of the belief that the welfare state was only created to help the poor (Harvey 1960 p.4). It also spoke of the lack of council housing and the appalling state of much of the accommodation for the poor. In conclusion, the pamphlet argued for more humanity in NA and a change in social attitudes. Also for poverty to be recognised as a problem which needed cash and practical help for those affected, not merely casework and "amateur psychiatry" (Harvey 1960 p.3); a snub to the eugenics inspired attempts to treat poverty as an individual failing. It was the system that needed to change not the clients of welfare. The pamphlet was made all the more effective by its detailed case study of one family.

If these studies had begun to show that want had yet to be conquered, it was the monograph *The Poor and the Poorest* that was to herald fully the rediscovery of poverty. This short study, the first of what was to be a long line to be based on the Family Expenditure Survey (FES), showed in dry statistics that not only had 7.9% (10.1% of households) of the population in 1953/4 been below 140% of the basic NA plus rent but that by 1960 this had increased to 14.2% of the population (17.9% of households) (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.38 and p.40). It was

not just the elderly that were suffering; in 1953/4 8.2% of children were living in families below 140% of NA level and by 1960 it had increased to 17% (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.32 and p.41). More shocking was the fact that poverty did not just affect certain minorities, it affected the family with a working head. In 1953/4 nearly a third of those below 140% NA relied on full time wages, by 1960 41% of those below this figure relied primarily on earnings (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.38 and p.41). By 1960 a sixth of children were under this level. Although *The Poor and the Poorest* was published in December 1965, some of the findings had already been published in the British Journal of Sociology (Townsend 1962).

The study was not without its critics. *The Economist* wrote a very critical review of the monograph, critical enough for Townsend to write to Abel-Smith asking whether he thought it was worth replying (letter 13.166 file 1 box 69). The main argument that *The Economist* was making was that Abel-Smith and Townsend's definition of poverty was too generous and was detracting attention away from the really poor below the NA line (*The Economist* 1.1.66 p.29). The NAB was unhappy because the poverty line fixed on NA would mean that whenever benefits were raised the numbers in poverty would increase (Veit Wilson 1999 p.120). Also there was criticism of where they had obtained the figure of 140%. The answer was to be found in Townsend's 1962 article and was the average actual expenditure of people on NA (Townsend 1962 p.214). There were other criticisms that could be made of the study. The figures for 1953/4 were based on expenditure, which is normally over-estimated and the figures for 1960 on income, which is normally under-estimated.⁴⁰ When the numbers in poverty were calculated using expenditure for 1960, the percentage dropped to 12.4% of the population, (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.57-9) still a shocking statistic. In addition when poverty in 1953/4 was measured on the Rowntree scale, 4.1% of the population were in poverty (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.36), still two and half times as great as Rowntree but far lower than using the 140% of NA measure. Much of the increase in poverty was due to its redefinition. However, whatever the criticisms of *The Poor and The Poorest*, it was the important catalyst

⁴⁰ In 1953/4 they used FES expenditure estimations as that were the most accurately collected data. In 1960 they were advised to use FES income estimations.

for bringing the attention of the government and the media to the problem of family poverty.

This rediscovery of poverty in Britain was not unique by any means (Sinfield 1968 p.1 and 34, European Social Development Programme (ESDP) p.3). In America the factors for the rediscovery of poverty fell into place in the 1950s and 1960s. The forced migration of rural blacks to the city ghettos as a result of the mechanisation of agriculture, along with the civil rights movement made poverty more visible and socially dangerous (Trattner 1979 p.250). In addition, a growing number of social workers became concerned and two Democrat senators began to investigate low income families (Galbraith 1979 p.249). Harrington's *The Other America* (Harrington 1962), which discussed the problems of a substantial minority in the age of affluence, forced poverty back onto the political agenda.

In Europe, too, poverty began to be rediscovered, at first by a few academics such as Münke and Blume in Germany, de la Gorce in France and Aubert in Norway (Sinfield 1968 p.35-54). Although, it never used the word poverty, even communist Czechoslovakia began to research those on low incomes in 1960 (Sinfield 1968 p.35). Yet in 1969 the ESDP of the United Nations on Socially Deprived Families found that in 1967-9 only in France, Great Britain⁴¹ and Israel⁴² were there broad empirical studies of family poverty (ESDP 1972 p.29-30). However, in 1967 two international conferences on poverty and allowances for children were held in Britain and USA.⁴³ These allowed researchers to share ideas and information.

It would be wrong to suggest that the government itself was not becoming more aware of the problem of poverty. The concern about pensioner poverty in the Rowntree report had been followed up by the government in the Phillips report of 1954. There had been pension reforms advocated by Labour in 1957 and enacted

⁴¹ The ESDP report refers to the Circumstances of Families study of 1967, which only looked at two children or more families and therefore excluded many one parent families in poverty.

⁴² The Israeli study was confined to the Jewish population, this of course excluded the Palestinians and any other non-Jewish groups (ESDP 1972 p.10).

⁴³ The International Seminar on Poverty held at the University of Essex in 1967 and arranged by some CPAG members (acting in their academic roles) and the International Conference on Children's Allowances in New York, see Burns, E.M. (1974 reprint edition first 1968) *Children's allowances and The Economic Welfare of Children: The Report of a Conference*. Citizen's Committee For Children, New York, USA.

the Conservatives in 1959. The NAB had also conducted two secret reports on the adequacy of both children's and adults' NA rates. Both reports were completed before the CPAG was established (Veit Wilson 1999 p.123-131). Veit Wilson suggests the impetus behind these reports came from the new Secretary of the NAB, Donald Sargent, who believed that a new Labour government would wish to do something about the scale rates and wanted the information ready (Veit Wilson 1999 p.117).⁴⁴ Veit Wilson's research correlated with evidence from the NAB/SBC annual reports confirms that the NAB did know about family poverty and was concerned about rates in the 1950s and 1960s (Veit Wilson 1999 p.117). There had been pressure on the government before the CPAG. A former civil servant recalls that "the Titmice⁴⁵ had been nibbling away for years, there had been a constant barrage of attack" (Beltram quoted in Veit Wilson 1999 p.119). Yet the government or the NAB never published a report on family poverty until the 1967 publication of *Circumstances of Families*.

Poverty was rediscovered for three reasons. Firstly, the dismissing as a "problem" of anyone who did not share in the rising prosperity of the post war world was gradually discredited in Britain and other countries. Secondly, poverty was redefined in Britain not only by researchers such as Townsend but also by politicians. Thirdly, small numbers of dissenters did question the supposition that poverty had been abolished. Their research began to prove that based on their definitions of poverty, the number of poor was large and increasing. These researchers were also clever at publicising their research. Harrington's *The Other America*, de la Gorce's *La France Pauvre* and Abel-Smith and Townsend's *The Poor and the Poorest* were influential because they were well publicised. This brought poverty to the attention of the government and the public.

3.2 Early Period: 5 March 1965- 1st August 1966

This section deals with CPAG's early period. That is from March 5 1965 when the first meeting took place to August 1 1966 when the first full time member of staff took his post. Lowe in his introduction to the 1993 witness seminar splits CPAG's

⁴⁴ For a further explanation of the events see John Veit Wilson, *Playing a Political Game? Civil Servants and the Adequacy of National Assistance* in Lowe 1998 p.12.

⁴⁵ A name given to those who worked with Titmuss at the LSE. Veit Wilson included under this title Professor Abel-Smith, Professor Peter Townsend, Professor David Donnison and Tony Lynes

early history into three periods. The first lasted from the first meeting (March 5 1965) to the appointment of Tony Lynes⁴⁶ as first full time secretary (August 1 1966). The second dealt with the period up until Herbison's resignation (July 1967) and the third until Lynes resignation (November 1968) (Lowe 1995 p.606-7). McCarthy has a chapter dealing with the period until Herbison's resignation in 1967 (McCarthy 1986, chapter three). Like Lowe this study defines the early period as the time from the first meeting to the appointment of a full time secretary. This is because it was during this period that CPAG established itself as a pressure group but was restricted by the fact that there was no full time member of staff able to co-ordinate and develop the group's activities.

The first meeting of the group that was to call itself the CPAG took place on March 5 1965 at Toynbee Hall. Harriet Wilson,⁴⁷ a lecturer at the University of Wales and a member of the Social and economic Affairs Committee of the Society of Friends (SEAC) invited a number of people working with the poor or involved in poverty research to a meeting. In her invitation she said that the SEAC was especially concerned with the neglect of family allowances in the new government's proposals for increases in benefits and allowances (Wilson 1986 p1361). At the meeting Brian Abel-Smith⁴⁸ gave a paper on the findings that would be later published as *The Poor and The Poorest*. Although accounts by Field and Briggs and MacCartney claim that the choice of family poverty was a last minute decision (Field 1982 p.23, Briggs and MacCartney 1984 p.168), the SEAC had been working on poverty for some time (Wilson 1986 p.1361-2, Wilson 1982 p.31).

After the meeting, there was a general consensus that something needed to be done about the problems of family poverty. A month later there was a second meeting at Fred Philp's⁴⁹ Family Service Unit (FSU) office.⁵⁰ Thirteen people were present and there were four apologies (EC minutes 5.4.65, file 1 box 65,

(Veit Wilson 1999 p.119).

46 See appendix A for biography

47 See appendix A for biography

48 See appendix A for biography

49 See appendix A for biography

50 The FSU was a voluntary social work organisation, which concentrated on case work methods to help "problem families". The organisation developed out of the Pacifist Service units, which had assisted bombing victims during the war.

PTA). It was at this meeting that it was decided that a memorandum should be sent to Douglas Houghton, the Social Services Overlord in the Cabinet.

However, there is also a clue to the members' perceived choices about how the group should develop. There was a suggestion that they should make a representation "to the government asking for financial help for a body which would investigate the problem of poverty and make recommendations on the subject to government departments." The name "Advisory Council for The Alleviation of Poverty was suggested" (EC minutes 5.4.65 box 65 file 1, PTA). The memorandum at this time could have been used either as "evidence offered to some relevant government Committee of Enquiry or as a basis of an approach to the Minister for financial help" (EC minutes 5.4.65, box 65 file 1, PTA). This was only a suggestion but the implications, if had been accepted, would have been great for the CPAG. The result would have been that the CPAG became what Grant terms a prisoner group (see chapter 2.1.3). In other words, if the CPAG had become reliant on government funding, it would have been seriously restricted in what campaigning it could do, because any criticism of government would have seriously damaged its insider strategy and put its funding in peril.

The suggestion was never acted upon and even at this early stage it was agreed that there should be contact with the media (EC minutes 5.4.65, box 65 file 1, PTA). Yet, there was an emphasis on acceptability. In May, it was proudly recorded that a meeting at the House of Commons had given the group easy access to the Minister, although at the same meeting they discussed giving a copy of the memorandum to the press (EC minutes 7.5.65 box 65 file 1, PTA). Even in Autumn 1965, when Brian Abel Smith and Peter Townsend⁵¹ were considering possible names for the group, the title "Committee for the Alleviation of Poverty", which sounds monotonously like a government committee, was still on the list. However, also on the list were far more pro-active names such as Child Poverty Action Group, Protect Children from Poverty, Help to Poor Children and Campaign to Abolish Poverty (draft of Christmas memorandum autumn 1965 (?), File 1, Box 65, PTA).

The memorandum to Douglas Houghton was sent on the June 30. Houghton was

the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Social Services Overlord (see chapter 6.1.2). The memorandum defined people in poverty as those below the standard of basic NA rates plus rent. It brought attention to the fact that the Minister of Labour estimated that somewhere between 50,000 and 150,000 families lived on less than the basic NA due to low wages. Multiplied by the Minister's estimate that each family averaged more than three children, the CPAG argued that the numbers were something like 150,000 to 450,000 children living at less than NA level (Memorandum of the "Family Poverty Group", JVWP p.2). The memorandum went on to say that there was a need to increase the income of families, both when the head of household was in and out of work. However, at the same time it was important not to diminish the work ethic and not to give encouragement to increases in family size. This would be best achieved by increasing family allowances or by modifying child tax allowances in the favour of poorer families (ibid. p.3). Practically, the group suggested a more positive view on family planning and even delaying family allowances from the first year or two of the child's life to delay any benefits of having a child (ibid. p.3).

The group then suggested two solutions to the problem of child poverty. The first is accredited to John Veit-Wilson⁵² and suggested abolishing Child Tax Allowances and instead increasing family allowances to twenty five shillings for the second child onwards and thirty five shillings to any child over 16 years. In addition, first children would be entitled for the first time to family allowances of ten shillings. The figures showed that this would help the lowest wage earners most and particularly those with more than two children. It would only have seriously adversely affected the average family (those on eighteen pounds a week), if it had only one child. The well off family on thirty pounds a week would lose. The scheme would therefore have been vertically redistributive, although it would have had negative effects on horizontal equity. It would have redistributed at all income levels from the male wage earner to the housewife (ibid. p.4).

The alternative was a negative income tax, which had been calculated by Tony Lynes. This proposed that the child tax allowance was paid as an allowance to those below the income tax level calculated on the standard rate of tax. This

⁵¹ See appendix A for biography

would also give aid to the poorest with more than two children. In addition, the CPAG advocated that family allowances should be maintained and raised to ten shillings for all children.⁵³ However, it was not especially vertically redistributive, even the well off, thirty pounds a week family benefited. Therefore it actually increased horizontal equity for families at all income levels. The increase in the resources to families was to go to the wage earner, which did not mean that the whole family would benefit. As this scheme would be costly the group advocated using money from NI contributions, although keeping family allowances a non-contributory benefit. This should be the case, the group argued, because the "future wealth of the nation depends on the health and welfare of the child population" (ibid. p.5).

By July the group was discussing a letter to the Prime Minister signed by influential people (as well as another copy of the June memorandum) and a press conference. They also drew up a list of possible targets for the CPAG's propaganda. These included even at this early stage the media ranging from broad sheets of all political persuasions to the tabloids and also the specialist professional journals. All three political parties and the Bow Group and Fabian Society were listed. They also considered the Trade Unions, Local Authorities, other pressure groups, university social science departments, other educational establishments dealing with social science subjects and MPs (EC agenda, 15.7.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). Therefore despite the fact that they were close to the Labour Party, they were targeting even at this early stage nearly all the possible targets for pressure groups that Whiteley and Winyard list in their analysis (see chapter 2.1).⁵⁴

The next action of the group was to approach a selection of influential people and ask them to support an appeal to the Prime Minister. There was some discussion as to the definition of influential people. Whether this should mean, as Fred Philip wanted, twenty prominent people or, as Peter Townsend wanted, fifty leading figures in the field of social science (letter from Harriet Wilson to John Veit-

⁵² See appendix A for biography

⁵³ Family Allowances at that time were 8 shillings for the second child, 10 shillings for the third and others and nothing for the first.

⁵⁴ Whiteley and Winyard suggest that a pressure group can target the government both locally and nationally, the media, political parties, trade Unions and the CBI, other pressure groups,

Wilson 14.7.65, JVWP). In the end, there were some forty-five signatories and not all of them were linked either to the health or social services sector or were involved in social science research (letter to the Prime Minister 22.12.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). On December 22 1965, the letter was presented to the Prime Minister Harold Wilson, who spoke to the group for ten minutes but made no promises and merely referred to Houghton's review of the Social Services. The meeting and the letter were reported in *The Times*, the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* and mentioned in other papers. Both the BBC and ITV mentioned the group in Nine O'Clock news bulletins, the latter had with an interview with Brian Abel-Smith. Independent Television followed the broadcast with a programme on family poverty that contained an interview with Peter Townsend. In his letter to those supporters, who had signed the letter to the Prime Minister, the chair (Fred Philp) said that the letter, press conference and media coverage were considered to be fairly successful alerting public attention to the problem (letter to supporters 27.1.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). The press were given information on December 23 on the publication date of *The Poor and The Poorest* at a general press conference at Toynbee Hall, although the "serious" press had been given information the previous day (EC minutes 3.12.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). After the Christmas letter and press conference, the CPAG kept itself in the public arena. Fred Philp wrote to a selection of newspapers and Peter Townsend to the *New Statesman* and the *Guardian* asking for subscribers and new members (EC minutes 7.1.66 file 1, box 65, PTA). It was reported that Townsend's letter to *Guardian* had attracted a hundred enquiries (EC minutes 4.2.66 file 1, box 65, PTA).

Meanwhile the group itself had been developing towards becoming a permanent, legal entity. In October the title Child Poverty Action Group was accepted as a name for the group and Annalies Becker was asked to act as secretary (EC minutes 29.10.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). Unfortunately, this was a short lived arrangement as soon after, Annalies Becker went to hospital and Harriet Wilson had to take over her duties (EC minutes, 3.12.65, file 1 box 65, PTA). At the same meeting, Fred Philp became the chairman, on a temporary basis. It was also at this meeting that the members agreed that the group should remain in being after the appeal to the Prime Minister. It was also agreed that CPAG should have a formal

parliament and the legal system. On this early list it is only the legal system that they do not target.

constitution which would allow it to raise money and have some permanent staff (if only part time) and continue to publicise the problem of poverty (EC minutes. 29.10.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). Maisie Birmingham went to the Guildhall library to find a suitable constitution. She chose the shortest, "which happened to be for a footpath society in Yorkshire. The group merely substituted Child Poverty for footpaths that was all" (Letter from Walter Birmingham to Harriet Wilson 22-11-93, HWP). The constitution was approved by members on the February 4 and accepted it at the first AGM on March 23 (EC minutes 4.2.66 and 23.3.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). It was at this AGM that the first elected committee took its posts.

The elected committee (EC) was basically the same as the committee that had been running the CPAG for the last year. In his article for *Contemporary Record*, Professor Lowe talks of three main groups founding the CPAG: LSE academics, non-LSE academics and social workers (Lowe 1995 p.608). Fred Philp elaborates on this during the Witness Seminar and says that many of the social workers were social work managers (Lowe and Nicholson 1995 p.616). The people who were involved in the CPAG in its first year support Lowe's theory. Appendix D shows that just over a third of them were involved in social work, just over a third in academia and the rest were from a variety of backgrounds. The Committee of twelve people elected (and co-opted) in March, demonstrated an equal balance between the social work profession and academia. The variety of backgrounds is somewhat narrower with the two miscellaneous being a social worker turned pressure group worker and a settlement leader. Although only two of the academics were from the LSE (where much of the rediscovery of poverty work had been based), a number of the others had links with it. There was also a balance between social work managers and actual social workers.

It was in early 1966 that the CPAG employed its first staff member. It had advertised in *The Friend* for a secretary but had no success (EC minutes 3.12.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). By January, however it employed Daphne Batty from a choice of four applicants (EC minutes, 7.1.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). However by the end of January, the CPAG was looking for a new secretary and even asked those who had signed the Christmas letter to the Prime Minister if they knew anyone suitable. For example, "a married graduate with appropriate training" who

would work for "a small and uncertain part-time salary" (letter from Fred Philp 27.1.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). It is a reflection of the time that highly educated women were willing to accept such a position and give groups like the CPAG such good value for their investment. However the energy needed to establish a pressure group was not possible for a part-timer. The new secretary Gillian Holroyde had other responsibilities. The members resented the fact that the appointment of a secretary had made little difference to the pace of CPAG's activities. Tensions developed and Holroyde resigned (EC minutes 1.6.66 file 1, box 65, PTA) .

The histories of the CPAG have commented on the slow pace of development during this first year. The appointment of the first part-time secretary and the opening of a bank account took until January 1966 and the constitution was not formally adopted until March 1966 at the first AGM. There was a certain belief that it would all be over by Christmas and that the group was short term. However this is not an uncommon belief amongst pressure groups of this type (Potter 1961 p.36). Even if it was believed that it would be over by Christmas, it is clear from the minutes that by the autumn of 1965, there was a realisation that the aims were going to take longer. The CPAG did agree to become a permanent, formal group in October 1965 and from then there were preparations for acquiring legal status. There is some evidence that for some members there was always a good chance that the group would have a longer life than the memorandum to Douglas Houghton. The idea that the CPAG should ask the government for funds to advise it on poverty would have resulted in a permanent group, although very unlike the CPAG that did develop. In addition, Harriet Wilson remembered at the witness seminar that even before the first meeting, she had written to Birmingham to say that she had "been thinking if this [was] going to grow into an interest group, which might give a little more permanence" (Lowe and Nicholson 1995 p.615). However, although perhaps at first there was a belief among some members that this would be a relatively short educational exercise with a sympathetic government, it became obvious within six months that the group would have to be more permanent.

3.3 The Emergence of the CPAG

The previous chapter discussed the general empirical factors that led to the formation of pressure groups (see chapter 2.2.2). This section will look at the CPAG specifically. The growth in the number of predominately left wing groups does correspond chronologically with the decline in individual membership of the Labour Party. However it is argued in the previous chapter that for many activists membership of the Labour Party and more direct action through single issue pressure groups was complementary.

Certainly there was some disappointment within the CPAG at the Labour government's lethargy over family poverty. Harriet Wilson mentions that one of the reasons why she called the first meeting of the Child Poverty Action Group was the failure of the new Labour government to mention poor families in the 1964 Queen's speech (Wilson 1986 p.1361). Yet at the same time there was not a sense of hostility. There was instead still a strong belief that Labour would listen to them and ameliorate the problem, once it knew its scale (Veit Wilson interview). The belief that the Labour government was essentially on the same side as CPAG in the fight against poverty explains the early hopes resting on the Houghton memorandum in June 1965. Although CPAG quickly realised that it would take more than memoranda to influence the Labour government, the relationship remained fairly good until 1970.

Chapter 2.2.2. offers the professionalisation of social workers and the expansion of higher education, particularly the social sciences, as factors which led to new, expert groups in society willing to work on behalf of the poor. The composition of CPAG's committee when it was established and during its first couple of years was dominated by these groups (see appendices D and E.3.1). Hence it is highly plausible as the research and work of these groups exposed them to the problem of poverty, a minority sought to channel their energies into alleviating the problem. Many would have been and were active in other ways. Harvey was heavily involved in the CABx. Wilson devoted her energies to a play-group for deprived children and the Quaker's SEAC. Townsend, Abel-Smith and Lynes were involved in Labour Party policy-making. What CPAG did was channel the energies of the newly expanding groups into pressure group activity.

3.3.1 CPAG and Group Replacement

Attention had been paid to the problem of family poverty before the meeting of March 1965. In January 1965, Richard Titmuss, the Chair of Social Administration at the LSE and mentor of Abel-Smith, Townsend and Lynes sent a memorandum to Houghton on behalf of a group who were concerned with the "problem of aid for children and had particularly in mind the need of large families on low incomes" (Titmuss to Houghton 19.1.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). The memorandum rejected the idea of abolishing child tax allowances to pay higher family allowances as this would hit the average family, and therefore "could not be introduced in one operation, if at all" (Titmuss memorandum 19.1.65, file 1, box 65, PTA p.4). Instead it favoured a negative income tax which would direct payments to those families with an income too low to "use up" all their tax allowances. As this measure would be expensive, it was proposed that child tax allowances were abolished for surtax payers (Titmuss memorandum 19.1.65, file 1, box 65, PTA p.7). The group of concerned people mentioned was highly likely to have been an *ad hoc* group of academics and civil servants. The meeting of March 1965 was arranged by Wilson, who had recently written for SEAC a book on the problems of family poverty. The SEAC had been interested in the topic for some time.

However neither the *ad hoc* group of academics and civil servants nor the SEAC could conduct a high profile campaign for more help for families in poverty. Civil servants are forbidden from actively joining political campaigns. Thus the group mentioned by Titmuss was a prisoner group (see chapter 2.1.3). The members of the group were unable to identify themselves and as the group was *only ad hoc* it was unable to raise funds or establish a membership. The SEAC was a religious organisation. Richard Allen, a Quaker and the chair of the March 5 meeting, argues that "it was right for the Society [SEAC] to have brought the concerned together, but it was not right for [the SEAC], as a small, religious body, to undertake the political operations which would obviously be needed to achieve the group's objective" (Allen 1984 p.766). The SEAC was also a tiny organisation that had insufficient funds for its work. It could not simply afford to shoulder the responsibility for the CPAG (Veit Wilson interview). CPAG was not unique as a pressure group descended from a Quaker background. Multi-Racial Britain was

established by a member of the Society of Friends Race Relations Committee in 1964. However, in this case the Society of Friends were not so directly involved (Heineman 1972 p.16-7).

CPAG replaced both these groups, because they were both limited in the methods they could use. The SEAC had an obligation to the religious community to which it belonged not to become openly involved in the political arena. The informal groups of Tony Lynes were imprisoned by their membership, who were unable to become publicly involved in politics. Therefore CPAG enabled the members to take a more public and open stance in the political arena. This should not however give the impression that the CPAG replaced these groups completely. It merely replaced them in the public argument about tackling family poverty. The *Titmice* academics continued to meet civil servants and the SEAC continued to investigate social and economic problems.

3.4 Conclusion

It was the rediscovery of poverty that provided the catalyst for a group of social workers and academics to decide on March 5 1965 that they needed to meet again and do something about the problems facing low-income families with children. However the catalyst only led to a group being formed because the potential activists had been produced by recent developments in the division of labour. The activists who might have previously seen the Labour Party as the proper channel for raising their concerns now believed that there was a need for an external pressure on the Party. Although CPAG was not the first group to become interested in the problem of family poverty, neither the SEAC nor the informal grouping around Tony Lynes were able to conduct a high profile campaign.

The origins of the group were to have an impact on its future development. The fact that the group was founded by social workers and academics sympathetic to the Labour Party shaped the approach the group was to take in the next five years in its approach to the government. However, the early members also made the conscious choice to use the media and follow a high profile approach. The inactivity of the group after Christmas 1965 confirmed to members that not only must CPAG become a formal group which could raise money but also must

employ staff who could support the members' decisions. The early appointments were only part-time and given the large amount of work needed to establish the group and provide clerical support for the membership were unsuccessful. It became apparent that the group needed at least one full-time member of staff with the relevant knowledge.

4 Chapter Four: The Internal Dynamics of the Child Poverty Action Group

The internal structure and politics of a pressure group plays an important part in determining its effectiveness. A stable group, which attracts a membership rich in quality if not quantity, has sufficient financial resources and clear goals, will have a much better chance of success. This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section is a narrative, which discusses the evolving structure of CPAG and the people involved. The second section examines the tensions within CPAG. These tensions at times led to heated debates between the people involved in CPAG whether they were involved at an EC, staff or local level. These debates were concerned both with the structure of CPAG itself and with the strategies and goals that CPAG was following. Why did these tensions emerge? How were they solved? The conclusion draws on the themes of compromise and tension to discuss the effectiveness of the internal structure and strategies of CPAG.

4.1 Narrative

4.1.1 The Structure

When Tony Lynes became the secretary of CPAG in August 1966, he reported to a twelve strong EC, many of whom he knew personally and professionally. The structure of CPAG was uncomplicated. By the end of that year, CPAG had already expanded to include 454 members. Although the majority were passive members, they would still need some attention if their support was to be maintained. Eight years later, the structure, in which Frank Field worked as director,⁵⁵ was very different (see appendix E.1). A number of local branches had been established and in 1970, they were given their own representative body, the Branches Council (BC). The autonomous Legal Department and Citizens' Rights Office (CRO) were established in 1969 and 1970 respectively.

⁵⁵ The secretary and director had the same job. There are two probable reasons why the name changed. Firstly, there were so many people called secretary. There was the honorary secretary, the secretary (Lynes), the membership secretary (briefly), clerical secretaries. Thus for clarity the name was changed. Secondly, Shelter called Des Wilson the director as did other groups. The title director may have been considered more attractive to potential recruits.

The pinnacle of power was theoretically the EC. It was to the EC that the secretary/director reported on a monthly basis. The EC was elected at the AGM, however a clause in the constitution also allowed the EC to co-opt members who could offer a certain expertise to the group. The structure became more complicated in 1969/70 with the establishment of the Legal Department, the CRO and the BC. The first two broadened the scope of CPAG's activity into the legal field as well as providing extra information about the effectiveness of the social security system in practice. They were each separately funded by the Joseph Rowntree Trust for their first three years. Although the Legal Department was founded first, it increasingly became absorbed by the CRO in all but name. The head of the CRO (and until 1971, the head of the Legal Department) reported directly to the EC (see chapter 5.2). The BC co-ordinated the work of the large number of branches that had sprung up all over the country. Each branch had the right to send a representative to its quarterly meeting. If a branch had more than fifty members it could send another representative for each extra fifty members. The BC also had the right to elect six representatives for the EC.

4.1.2 The EC

The EC can be divided into four groups for the period: a core group of founders and early members, co-optees, core branch members and other branch members (see appendix E.2). The first group reflected CPAG's origins. It was a mixed group of social work professionals and social administration academics. Thus the academic expertise was tempered by the practical experience of the social workers. The chair and to an extent the treasurer, Walter Birmingham, were from a social work background. The honorary secretary, Harriet Wilson, was an academic. The general shift of the EC from 1969 towards an academic dominated group was mirrored by the change in chair as Philp was replaced by Townsend in July 1969 (see appendix E.3).

However, the change in chair was not only significant because of the difference in the occupational backgrounds of the two men. Philp was very much a facilitator. He allowed the meetings to make decisions and kept in close contact with the honorary secretary, Wilson⁵⁶ (HWP), and with Townsend. Thus Philp saw his role

⁵⁶ The honorary secretary was essentially the deputy chair in her duties and position.

very much as co-ordinating the EC and seeking advice from key members. In contrast Townsend was concerned with giving direction to the EC. He worked closely with Field, the new director. Together they led strategies such as the *Poor get Poorer Under Labour* campaign (see chapter 6.3.1). In this case, the EC was consulted but not included in the early preparation work. Wilson, who had had a good relationship with Philp, had a less central role with Townsend and Field at the helm. Walter Birmingham's role, the first treasurer, went from being very active in the early months became less influential even under Philp's chairship, his successor Trevor Bell made little impact on the direction of the group. Yet, Gary Runciman, who became treasurer in 1972, added to the group's profile. A quiet, academic he was respected by the EC for his well-reasoned contributions. In addition, his position as a hereditary lord meant that he had good contacts with the House of Lords (Field interview). Abel-Smith was in the early period an important figure on the EC. The test case strategy and the establishing of the Legal Department were his initiative, sparked by his growing academic interest in legal matters.⁵⁷ However his appointment as Crossman's advisor in late 1968 meant that he left CPAG.

The co-option clause of the constitution was used in 1967 to introduce a variety of experts to the EC. Beti Jones, a social worker was co-opted because of her direct experience with the poor. More significantly, Des Wilson and Father Eammon Casey, the director and chair of Shelter, were co-opted. There were already pressure group workers on the EC from the National Council of Women and the National Association for Mental Health, however no links with these organisations had been formed. Although Father Casey had too many other commitments to attend meetings, Des Wilson⁵⁸ became an active member of the EC until 1969. Wilson was a charismatic New Zealander. A brilliant public relations strategist, he had made Shelter a household name. In short he had a populist appeal that CPAG by 1968 was lacking (Philp to EC 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, PTA). However Des Wilson parted company with CPAG after the aborted merger attempt (see below 4.2.1.1). CPAG failed to co-opt more "alternative experts". Instead, with the exception of Sir John Walley, a former Deputy Private

⁵⁷ He was a co-author with R. Stevens in 1967 on the publication *Lawyers and the Courts* and in 1968 with R. Brooke *In Search of Justice*.

⁵⁸ For a biography see appendix A

Secretary to the MPNI, all the co-optees were academics. Some of these academics like Tony Atkinson, an economics professor at Essex, were prestigious in their field.

The third group were the core branch members. At first a representative from each branch was co-opted onto the EC, hence the introduction of Rosemary Vear from Merseyside, David Bull from Manchester⁵⁹ and Iain Jordan of the Scottish Poverty Action Group (SPAG). All were academics but Jordan was also heavily involved in the Labour Party and pushed the issue of the wage stop at the 1967 Labour Conference (see chapter 7.1.). After the BC had been introduced, four of its six representatives were constantly re-elected between 1970 and 1974, thus only two of the seats changed hands regularly. This core of four were all young social science academics from the provinces. However, whereas Jonathan Bradshaw⁶⁰, David Bull and Tony Rees⁶¹ were committed to the branches, Veit Wilson was more sceptical about the effectiveness of branches. Veit Wilson had been a founder members of CPAG and was protective of its expert basis. On this issue he was particularly out-spoken and was a main player in the debates about CPAG's structure in 1972 (see below 4.2.). Given his close links with some of the key members of the core group⁶² and his long experience on the EC, his views were taken seriously. As the core group started to leave CPAG, it was this core branch group and after 1970 the co-optees that began to take their places.

The final group was the least powerful. The non-core branch members only held office for a year and therefore were not sufficiently acquainted with the EC to carry much influence. Before 1973 most of this group were non-academics. It was the holders of the office in 1972, Sean Creighton⁶³ and John Ward both welfare and community action workers, that tried to alter the structure of the EC to reverse the academic dominance and to make it more democratic (see below 4.2.).

This shift towards academic dominance during the period can be partly explained by the fact that more non-academics left CPAG in the period before 1970 than

⁵⁹ For a biography see appendix A

⁶⁰ For a biography see appendix A

⁶¹ For a biography see appendix A

⁶² Wilson is his mother and he had worked for a period in Townsend's department at Essex.

⁶³ Creighton was a welfare rights worker, member of the Patients' Association as well as the chair of Wandsworth branch.

academics, the main reason is that the new core branch and co-opted EC members after 1970 were nearly all academics. An explanation for the first was that academics were more able to visit London on a monthly basis to attend meetings than people from other occupations.⁶⁴ Therefore the core branch members were rarely seriously contested in BC elections by non-academics.⁶⁵ The reason for the near exclusive co-option of academics was a result of academic dominance. When considering experts to be co-opted, academics were likely to think of those with which they were acquainted. The expertise and prominence of many of the academics on the EC were advantageous to CPAG as an expert pressure group. However there was always a danger that CPAG would lose touch with the poor completely and lose the potential input of other experts with skills in public relations and valuable contacts. The first danger was lessened by CPAG's involvement at a local level in welfare rights work, which did keep the EC in touch with the poor. However the loss of Des Wilson⁶⁶, a public relations expert, and the failure to attract representatives of the trades union movement was a serious problem for CPAG in developing appeal to a wider audience.

4.1.3 The Staff

The number of staff employed by CPAG increased considerably during the period. In August 1966 there was just one member of staff: Tony Lynes. He was supplemented by a secretary in November. By 1974 there were seven permanent members of staff plus a number of administrative staff (see appendix E.4). One of the reasons for the increase in staff was the diversification of CPAG. The Legal Department and CRO meant the employment of a full time lawyer, a research officer, an interviewer, a director and administrative staff. Therefore, until 1972, when the deputy director was employed, the director was managing the same lobby work as well as having to co-ordinate with the CRO and Legal Department (in difficult circumstances see below 4.1.3.2.). Coupled with the work of co-ordinating the branches, his workload increased during this period. It was the

⁶⁴ Often professional reasons for going to London could be scheduled to fit with meeting dates.

⁶⁵ When in the 1972 BC election seven people stood. It was agreed that all seven could become EC members.

⁶⁶ Des Wilson, the director of Shelter, resigned from the EC after the Shelter merger deal fell through (see below 4.2.1).

engagement of the deputy director (with responsibility for branches) that lightened it and allowed him more time for lobbying.

4.1.3.1 The Secretary/Director

Lynes was an academic. His academic research position with Titmuss prior to July 1965 had not only given him a rigorous academic training but also meant that he had worked closely with Townsend and Abel-Smith. He was sympathetic with the Titmuss view on the social division of welfare. According to this view there were three systems of welfare, the benefits in cash and kind, tax reliefs and government tax relief to occupational benefits should be considered as a whole (Titmuss 1976 p.44-52). In addition, Lynes' training as an accountant meant that he was trained in the taxation system. Lynes had contacts within the government and Whitehall. He was a member of the Labour Party's Social Policy Sub-Committee from 1965 (see chapter 7.1). Thus, he knew Judith Hart before she became Minister for Social Security in 1967. He also knew other key Labour Party figures like Crossman. His secondment at the MPNI had introduced him to the relevant civil servants and Herbison, Hart's predecessor.

The Fabian approach to campaigning assumes that persuasive, rational arguments are enough to trigger and win a political debate (Clarke *et al* 1987 p.50). It was this approach that led CPAG to produce the original memorandum to Houghton in 1965. Neither Lynes or CPAG were naive enough to believe that this would be enough in December 1965, hence the publicity campaign that accompanied *The Poor and the Poorest* and the second memorandum. Certainly, when campaigning Lynes mastered the media and used a number of publicity tactics (see chapter 6.2). Yet, Lynes believed that accurate and well-argued memoranda were the key to success (Lynes in Kelly forthcoming).

Field was the deputy head of department at a further education college. He was a Labour member of Hounslow Council in London. When he was interviewed for the job at CPAG he admitted that his knowledge of poverty was scant (Field 1982 p.29). Yet his dynamism, organisation and journalistic skills convinced CPAG that he would make a good director. However Field never had Lynes' extensive knowledge of the taxation and benefits systems nor contacts in the Labour

hierarchy. Although the change in direction which resulted in the *Poor Get Poorer Under Labour* campaign was triggered by circumstances as much as personality, it is highly unlikely that Lynes would have followed such a policy (Lynes interview). Despite being an outsider from the national CPAG, Field worked well with Townsend and the two of them gave CPAG a decisive leadership.

4.1.3.2 The Other Staff

The responsibilities of the CRO and Legal Department staff will be discussed in chapter 5.2. Apart from administrative staff, the other main staff member in CPAG was the deputy director. In 1972, Jane Streather⁶⁷, a young academic, was selected from a list of candidates. Half of her job was to be responsible for the branches, the other half was to assist Field. The relationship between her and Field was not easy (Streather interview) and they did not co-operate on any publications. Apart from Audrey Harvey⁶⁸, who was the first director of the CRO, the main characteristic of all the policy staff (both CPAG and CRO/Legal Department) was youthfulness. All were in their twenties and thirties (Streather, Bull, interviews). Stuart Weir,⁶⁹ the former director of the CRO, describes them as “an exceptionally talented group of people” (Weir interview). This is born out by the fact that many of them went on to have successful careers.⁷⁰ They were enthusiastic and hard-working. However they did lack experience. For most of them this was their first job in pressure group activity. Although that meant that the group could pay them relatively low wages, it also meant that they took several years to reach their peak performance (Townsend interview).

4.1.4 The Mass Membership of the CPAG.

At first mass membership was considered to be necessary in order to finance the CPAG (Fred Philp to supporters⁷¹ 27.1.66 file 1, box 65, PTA) and a target of 3,000 was suggested in 1966 (minutes 3.8.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). This target had

⁶⁷ For a biography see appendix A

⁶⁸ For a biography see appendix A

⁶⁹ For a biography see appendix A

⁷⁰ Field became a Labour MP and was a key non-cabinet minister in charge of welfare reform in the 1997 Labour Government. Streather moved to become the director of National Council for Single Woman and her Dependents in 1975, Lister became the director of CPAG in 1979. Several of the lawyers went on to have successful law careers.

still not been reached by 1973 (see appendix E.5.1). From March 1966 it was possible to join for the sum of £1 *per annum*, a not insignificant sum in 1966. In order to boost and maintain membership, CPAG launched *Poverty* as a material benefit. The production of pamphlets from 1969 onwards led to a second tier of membership at £2 *per annum* in 1970 (Newsletter 1, Feb. 1970, file 4, box 65, PTA). In addition members of local branches usually paid on average a local subscription of five shillings *per annum* in 1968 (Rosemary Vear 1968 p.1).

Membership of CPAG was, therefore, not at a negligible expense, despite the benefits. Yet the minimum revenue from membership barely paid the expenses. By 1971, the cost of the memberships' entitlement of *Poverty* and CPAG's pamphlets⁷² was £2,304⁷³. The minimum income from members was £2,650 (EC minutes 25.9.71, file 5, box 65, PTA). Therefore the CPAG could make as little as £346 from its membership. However, in practice all subscriptions amounted to £5484 (1971),⁷⁴ over twice as much. Some subscribers did not expect literature in return and others paid more than the minimum amount.

In 1972, as membership numbers increased at a snail's pace (see appendix E.5.2.), Veit Wilson questioned the conventional wisdom that CPAG needed a large membership. He argued that CPAG was not dependent on its supporters financially, although he conceded that this situation might eventually change. He made two proposals. Firstly, he suggested that the subscriptions to CPAG from members should be the full economic rate and all branch members should be required to contribute to national CPAG (Veit Wilson 1972 p.6). Secondly, the subscribers should be renamed supporters and encouraged to play only a supportive role (Veit Wilson p.5). Creighton responded that an elitist EC would mean a debate about poverty, "which may be totally irrelevant to the real needs of the poor and this would be compounded by higher membership fees" (Creighton 1972 p.1).

There were three main reasons why members were important to CPAG. Firstly, on pure financial grounds, CPAG did need its membership subscriptions. It is true

⁷¹ As in those people who signed the Christmas letter to Harold Wilson

⁷² Sent to 29% of the membership who paid the £2 two tier membership

⁷³ Including the distribution costs

⁷⁴ Many paid more than the £1 or £2.

that subscription was not the most important source of revenue, but it became increasingly important and was more reliable than grants and donations. Secondly, members with voting rights did bring new ideas to the BC and to a lesser extent the EC, a need which Veit Wilson recognised (Veit Wilson 1972 p.5). Thirdly, the circulation of Poverty and the pamphlets to the membership spread CPAG's ideas. Academic members used their CPAG materials for teaching purposes (Bull and Bradshaw interviews).

Whether higher membership fees and the removal of voting rights would have affected CPAG's membership is pure speculation. From the scant material available, it is clear that CPAG's general membership tended to be professional social-workers⁷⁵, academics and to a lesser extent other professionals (Worsfield 1971 p.342 and 344). Higher membership fees would not have been intolerable, but as there was most likely a large overlap with other promotional groups (such as Shelter), those prioritising the other group may have let their CPAG subscription lapse. This may have seriously dented CPAG's membership. The loss of voting rights would have had a minimal effect given that they were rarely used.

4.1.5 The Development of Branches

4.1.5.1 The Physical and Social Geography of Branches

Between 1966 and 1973 there were sixty-four branches of the CPAG. Although the London area had about a third of these branches, they were (at different times) spread across the United Kingdom, with a large number being found in the North and Midlands. Wales was very under-represented and both its branches were in the South. Northern Ireland and Scotland had their own autonomous organisations (see appendix E.6.1.). From 1971 London's branches were served by a London Poverty Action Group, a forum for the discussion of London wide policy and action.

The branches grew fast; by 1968 there were fourteen branches and by 1970, there were twenty-three. The early branches were concentrated in the provinces, with only three in the London area before 1970. By 1970, the BC was necessary to co-

⁷⁵ A large number were housewives, but at closer examination, a large percentage of these were social workers on career break.

ordinate policy and action across the UK but also to allow branches representation on the EC. It was impossible to co-opt twenty-three branch representatives onto the EC.⁷⁶ In January 1971 there were reportedly forty active branches (Worsfold 1971, p.334) and by the end of that year fifty (Director's report December 1971, file 5, box 65, PTA). However, there was a huge gap between the number of branches claimed and the number that were active and in contact with the national office. In reality, by the end of 1972, there were twenty-one branches that the deputy secretary judged to be still active. Of these three were "one-man shows" and little had been heard of three more (BC papers 15.12.72, JVWP).⁷⁷ This corroborates Field's assertion that at any one time there were between fifteen and twenty active branches (Field 1982 p.51). There was also a steady turn over of active branches. As old branches became inactive new branches were formed. The distribution across the country also altered. By 1972, the majority of branches were in the South and East of the country, including a number of strong groups in the North East. In comparison the Celtic fringe was still very poorly served.

Finlayson remarked that branches of CPAG were to be found not necessarily in areas of poverty but in university towns (Finlayson 1994 p.152). If all CPAG branches are taken into account, then this conclusion is not tenable. Two thirds of all CPAG branches were not to be found in University towns or areas. However, setting up a CPAG branch was relatively simple; maintaining it over the longer term was more difficult. Of those groups that had by the end of 1972 lasted for more than two years, three quarters were university-based. In contrast, of those groups lasting less than a year four-fifths were non-university (see appendix E.6.2).

There were two main reasons why CPAG branches should be strongest in the university towns. Firstly, academics and students were not only more likely than the general public to have heard of CPAG but also to sympathise with what was nationally an academic-dominated pressure group. Hence the potential membership was larger. Secondly, it was a matter of time. Academics had then more flexible timetables and the branch work could be incorporated into academic

⁷⁶ Apart from the unwieldiness of the EC meetings it would have been impossible due to the lack of space in Macklin Street.

⁷⁷ The one man shows were Newton Abbot, Stirling and Southend and the branches of which not much had been heard were Hackney, Manchester and South Hants.

work (Wilson 1971 p.1, Bull₂ interview). Students helped with projects and welfare rights stalls (Bull to Graves, 29.4.73 DBP, Bull₂ interview). In addition, social administration academics had considerable expertise in the field which others had to acquire (Wilson 1971 p.1).

Like the national body, local branches of CPAG were promotional groups. Hence, they were to be found, “when and where well educated middle class people with a sense of social commitment ... voiced concern over the problem of poverty and [were] prepared to do something about it” (Worsfold 1971 p.330). Thus, there was only a coincidental relationship between areas of high poverty and CPAG branches. Certainly some university based branches were in areas and cities with high poverty levels. Yet, in depressed South Wales, there were no active branches by 1972, although Royal Tunbridge Wells had a thriving local branch.

4.1.5.2 Branch Membership

Information on the numbers involved in branches, and members’ occupational background and political persuasion is scant for the whole period 1966-1974. The main source of information is Worsfold’s study of 1970. However this study is limited. Firstly, Worsfold was only able to gain information from ten branches out of a possible twenty four.⁷⁸ The ten were unrepresentative because all were based on universities and half were in the North East of England. Secondly, it only provides information about branches, their membership and their activities before 1970. However, given the lack of information, it does at least give some insight into the types of people CPAG attracted.

Branches varied a great deal in size. Whereas Merseyside had 265⁷⁹ members on its books by 1968-9 (Merseyside CPAG Annual report 1968-9) and Manchester 112, South Hants only claimed a membership of 23 (Worsfold 1971 p.345⁸⁰). The mean membership of a branch for 1969 was 63 (Worsfold 1971 p.345). However is it likely that a sizeable proportion of members in each branch had not paid and

⁷⁸ Five were not circulated with the questionnaire because three were in the process of closing and two were new. However nine branches never returned the questionnaire. Worsfold said that “all the questionnaires varied in their thoroughness (Worsfold 1971 p.333). He also includes Islington as a branch although it is only a welfare rights organisation until 1973.

⁷⁹ Although only 105 were active and only 67 had paid up. Therefore the true figure was probably between 60 and 100.

⁸⁰ Figures for 1969

were not active (Merseyside CPAG Annual report 1968-9, Year 1968, Bull 1970a).⁸¹

CPAG branches were promotional. They attracted middle-class members working on behalf of the poor. However in 1969, the largest group in the branches were social workers, with academics coming second (see E.6.3). Thus, although social workers were dwindling on the EC, they were still strongest in the branches. There are three other observations that can be made about CPAG branch members in 1968/9 from Worsfold's non-representative sample. Firstly, branch chairs and secretaries were fairly young. The mean age for a chair in 1968 was 29 years and in 1969 35 years, the mean ages for secretaries were 30 and 29 years respectively (Worsfold 1971 p.342-3). Of course the number of students in university-based branches would have lowered the mean age. The housewives and social workers may well have been slightly older. Yet the overall impression is of branches attracting a large number of relatively young people.

Second is the role of women in the branches. Given that housewives accounted for 16% of Worsfold's sample of branch members in 1969 and social workers, another female dominated group for 36%, it is likely that over half of all CPAG branch members at that time were women (see E.6.3). The chairs of the branches were mostly male in 1968 and 1969, but the secretaries were mostly female. However, although men were taking the most prestigious posts, they were not the most active and powerful. Worsfold notes that it was the secretary who communicated with the national office (Worsfold 1971 p.343). As the link she was the one with the most information. Certainly in the early days women played an important role in the local branches. Finally, branch members overwhelmingly (85%) supported the Labour Party. The 3% who supported the left wing of the Conservative Party was matched by Marxists and Communists (Worsfold 1971 p.342). This correlates with what is known about the EC's political allegiances.

There is no evidence to confirm whether these trends continued into the 1970s. Branches often complained of insufficient active members to carry out activities.⁸²

⁸¹ From Merseyside's figures from 1968-9. It appears that 40% of its 265 members were "active" (they give no definition) but only 25% were actually up to date with subscriptions (Merseyside CPAG Annual Report 1968-9, DBP).

Bristol, an university based branch, contained a large number of academics on its committee. However, other branches like Wandsworth attracted mostly community and welfare workers. Bristol's minutes show that women continued to be well represented on the committee. The fact that there was a large enough overlap between CPAG branches and the Labour Party to ensure CPAG resolutions on the Labour Party conference agenda⁸³ suggests that there was still a strong presence of Labour supporters in the branches.

4.1.5.3 The Activities of Branches

Not all branches saw it as their role to provide the central organisation with funding. A proposal for branches to contribute towards a part time or full time organiser was defeated in the BC. Yet a motion for the EC to discuss the possibility of appointing one was carried (BC Minutes 16.5.71, JVWP). Of those branches that agreed that they should contribute, a third made it clear that they were not prepared to indulge in fund-raising (CPAG 1971). The branches were therefore not directly a major source of revenue for the central organisation. However, members attracted to the solidary benefits of the branches may have also joined at a national level. In addition as well as attracting national members for CPAG, they were also an important source of "new blood" for the EC (Streather interview).

The branches had an important role in generating publicity at a local level for CPAG (Vear 1968 p.1). Branches were successful in obtaining television and newspaper publicity for the issue of poverty and for their work in the area (Bradshaw, Bull, Veit Wilson interviews). Manchester, York and Bristol were particularly successful at getting television coverage and most branches could get articles in the local newspaper (see chapter 8.5)

The branches' third role was to educate certain influential sections of the population about CPAG and family poverty. There were two main ways in which this could be achieved. Firstly, the branch could try and persuade other groups to affiliate. Secondly, it could speak to other groups. In achieving the former, CPAG

⁸² Even in 1970 York CPAG had too few volunteers with too little time to do a survey on low income earners.

⁸³ See chapter 7.1 for a full explanation of this strategy.

were not very successful. Worsfold's survey showed that branches in 1970 had a mean of 1.4 groups affiliated to them and half of his sample had no formal affiliations. Other pressure groups, Councils of Social Service (CSS) and local Labour Party groups were the most common affiliates (Worsfold 1971 p.338). Only Manchester managed to persuade a trades council to affiliate (Manchester CPAG Dec. 1968 newsletter, DBP).⁸⁴ Later some branches had strong links with CUs and Tenants Unions.⁸⁵ Forming links with other voluntary organisations was useful in preventing too much of an overlap in work as well as a sharing of resources. Yet to associate too closely with another group could be dangerous as its activities would reflect on CPAG (see chapter 9.2). Links with the Labour Party were a double sided sword. Although the Labour Party offered links to the local MP and councillors, it also gave the impression that CPAG was a left wing group and this was likely to damage its reputation as non-partisan.

A more informal and more casual way of educating other groups was for branches to have a speakers' panel which could offer talks to interested groups. There was a positive response for CPAG speakers. Merseyside in 1968-9 spoke to twenty groups "covering a wide social range" (Merseyside CPAG Annual report 1968-9, DBP p.4). Manchester spoke to fifty-five groups in 1968. Just under a third of them were political groups but two thirds of them were Labour Party groups. Manchester branch realised that it was unbalanced and hoped to try and rectify this (Manchester CPAG annual report 1968 DBP p.3). Despite Manchester's 1968 success in talking to trades unions. In general, trades unions and councils were not that interested in CPAG speakers (Bull and Bradshaw interviews).⁸⁶ Although a variety of groups asked for speakers, the majority were students, social work and other voluntary groups.⁸⁷ Therefore often CPAG branches were in effect preaching to the converted.

CPAG branches had variable relationships with their local SBC offices. Whereas Manchester had a very good relationship, Bristol never did (Bull interviews). Relationships could also be either tense with the local authorities or productive as

⁸⁴ He lists the local Labour Party, Councils of Social Service, Community Relations Councils, BASW, Shelter and Pre-school Playgroup Associations.

⁸⁵ York first attempted to form a CU in 1970 (Bradshaw interview). Wandsworth also formed a CU and had good links to the local tenants union. Cambridge also had good relations with local CUs.

⁸⁶ Only the Manchester 1968 Annual report mentions trades unions.

⁸⁷ Manchester CPAG Annuals report 1968 p.3, Bristol newsletter 2 October 1971 p.5

was the case in Manchester (Bull 1970 p.5-7). In addition, some branches built up a relationship with their local MP. Alf Morris was willing to ask questions for Manchester CPAG in Parliament (see chapter 7.2.2.) and Bristol had a good relationship with Tony Benn MP (Bull to Benn c. Feb.1973, DBP). Local SBCs had a certain amount of discretion regarding benefits, a good relationship could greatly assist SB claimants in an area. Local authorities were responsible for most educational and housing benefits. Therefore persuading the local authority to use permissive legislation and be generous in its payments could also have a large impact on the poor's living standards. In addition, local authorities acted as pressure groups on the government, as did the local SBCs on the central body. Hence, forging a constructive alliance at a local level could have an indirect impact at a national level as MPs were the link to Parliament.

Branches carried out surveys on issues such as the availability of claim forms at post offices, the workings of optical, dental exemptions, educational benefits and surveys of levels of poverty in certain areas. A large number of branches undertook these surveys (see appendix E.6.4). Merseyside undertook in 1968 and again in 1970 larger surveys of poverty and people's knowledge of welfare rights (Merseyside CPAG 1970). Overall university based branches were more successful in their completion of surveys because of members' experience and the availability of students with time.⁸⁸ CPAG had few staff and it was not possible for them to carry out a great deal of research and surveys. The branches' survey and research work gave the CPAG new evidence about local case studies and through national surveys like the family allowance survey of 1972⁸⁹, a more national picture.

A thorough and well-publicised report on the failings of a local authority benefits could excite the media: local and national. The best case study is Bristol CPAG's 1973 report on school uniform grants, a much neglected part of the local authorities' duties. Bristol undertook a large survey, at the local authority's request, after highlighting in the *Sunday Mirror* and the local press the cases of two local families whose children suffered stigma because of their lack of a

⁸⁸ Sometimes as part of academics projects

⁸⁹ Undertaken at the request of Streather, the deputy director, in 1972, to gauge the nationally the views that mothers of various social classes held about family allowances.

suitable school uniform (Bull to Graves⁹⁰ 29.4.73 DBP). Despite some restrictions on talking to teachers, the report was an overwhelming success in terms of publicity. The story appeared in the eight main national papers, in the two main Bristol local papers and thirteen other local papers spread all across England and Wales (DBP).⁹¹ Within Bristol, there was something of a backlash in the local paper as CPAG was unwilling to divulge information about its informants (*Bristol Evening Post* 27.4.73 p.1, 28.4.73). However, after deliberations on the report by the council it was broadly accepted that there was a problem (*Bristol Evening Post* 17.10.73). Tyneside branch made a similar study as the basis for a programme on the issue on Tyne and Tees TV (30/7/73 DBP). Cardiff branch, through a few local enquiries, was able to give local examples to the *Cardiff Western Mail* (19.4.73, DBP).

4.1.6 Finance

A promotional group, concentrating its efforts on lobbying the government, need not have considerable financial backing to be successful. The expertise on CPAG's EC cost nothing. Many of CPAG's arguments were based on research undertaken by members and others in their academic roles. The army of branch members undertook specific research projects for no remuneration and welfare rights work at a local level had negligible financial costs. However the intermittent nature of CPAG's activity before Tony Lynes was employed is proof that full time staff were necessary (see chapter 3.2). As CPAG moved into the welfare rights field the necessary funding needed was greater; lawyers, researchers and interviewers had to be employed (see chapter 5.2).

Compared to other pressure groups like Shelter, which by the late 1960s had a turn over of several million pounds (Wilson interview), CPAG was a shoestring organisation throughout the period (see appendix E.7.1.). However it managed to balance its books (at least for CPAG and the Legal Department) and increase its revenue considerably during the period. A tiny income of £3,683 in 1965/6 was increased by some 750% to £27,988 in 1973. This meant that it could remain a viable independent group, something that had not looked possible in 1968, when

⁹⁰ Bill Graves was the Labour leader of Bristol City Council.

CPAG had almost agreed to a take-over by Shelter (see below). Although the CRO was in debt until 1973, CPAG and the Legal Department managed to produce surpluses. In 1973, a large increase in revenue from grants, subscriptions and literature sales gave CPAG an income far in excess of its expenditure for the first time.

The income did not only grow but its sources changed. Until 1969 grants and donations were the most important source of income for CPAG (see appendix E.7.2). These grants came from a variety of sources. One of the most important was the Joseph Rowntree Trust, which helped fund CPAG for its first year and later gave a total of £30,000 over three years to the Legal Department and CRO. It was only because of this funding that the two organisations were possible. The secretary's salary for the first year was underwritten by the Sembal Trust. Individuals were also important through their trusts. Lord Sainsbury made several donations of £500 during the first few years of CPAG. His support continued through to the 1970s when he underwrote the costs of a deputy director. Lord Sainsbury's interest was encouraged by his friend Harriet Wilson. Sir Keith Joseph⁹² was also a donor. In 1970, his company Bovis was approached by CPAG and agreed to pay for premises for the group between £500 and £600 per year for at least three years (EC minutes 18.4.70 and Bovis to Field 1.4.70, file 4, box 65, PTA). Joseph's interest stemmed from his concern about child poverty and his belief that research was necessary (Halcrow 1989 p.52 and 83).

However as CPAG grew, although grants and donations remained important, subscriptions grew in importance. In 1971, they were more important than grants. Even when the amount secured in grants increased considerably in 1972 and 1973, subscriptions still accounted for a third of income. Subscriptions were not just important for the actual revenue that they generated but also because it was a more stable and long term source of revenue than grants and donations which could not be guaranteed in the long term. The other source of income that grew in importance was that from the sales of literature. The amount generated tripled between 1971 and 1972 and accounted for a fifth of income in 1972. Thus

⁹¹ Mr. Bull had commissioned a professional "cuttings" company to supply him with articles from all the British Press. It is likely therefore that practically all the available cuttings have been preserved.

⁹² The Conservative MP and later Secretary of State for the Social Services in Heath's Government (1970-4)

although the literature was produced with the primary purpose of educating the public about the issues (or in the case of the welfare benefits guide, informing of rights), it became increasingly an important source of revenue for the campaigning activities (Townsend interview).

Despite the early hope that branches would provide funding for national CPAG (Vear 1968 p.1), only two percent of income in 1972 and three percent in 1973 being provided by them. Streather had been employed to spend half her time servicing the branches but the total income from the branches in 1972 only paid for 17% to 18% of her branch time. The £50 *per annum* for national CPAG promised by the branches in 1972 (BC Minutes 17/18.2.73, JVWP) was only paid by a minority of branches.

Salaries consumed the lion's share of the expenditure. This was understandable for a group, for which human capital was its greatest asset. However, between 1972 and 1973 a gap between expenditure and salary costs is discernible (see appendix E.7.4). This was because other costs such as publicity and printing were also increasing as literature sales increased. Office and travel expenses may also have increased as more staff had to be accommodated.

4.2 *Tensions*

The developing structure, membership and strategies of CPAG as well as the changing external environment sparked tensions on the EC. These tensions can be divided into two main groups: those due to the internal structure and those concerned with fundamental goals. This section uses the theme of compromise to examine how the tensions were resolved and whether this led to the optimal outcome. It examines how the structure of CPAG ensured that certain goals were advanced at the expense of others. The success of the welfare rights strategy and therefore the CRO and Legal Department are discussed in chapter 5. Therefore this section will concentrate on contribution of the composition of the national CPAG and the activities of the local branches to the development of CPAG as a pressure group.

4.2.1 **The Structure of CPAG**

4.2.1.1 The Proposed “Merger” With Shelter

In 1968, Des Wilson proposed a merger between CPAG and Shelter. There were in fact two proposals. The first was a limited suggestion for a joint journal of the two groups, for which Shelter would pay the larger share (Des Wilson to Lynes c. December 1968, file 3, box 65, PTA). The second built upon this suggestion and argued for Shelter and CPAG to partially merge. It was proposed that Shelter would set up a Shelter Anti-Poverty Group, which would be run by a Shelter Poverty researcher and funded totally by Shelter. It would essentially take over the national CPAG’s role. Although, CPAG would continue to exist it would be merely as a co-ordinator for the local groups. The director of Shelter would have control over public statements (see appendix E.8). What is most striking about the latter proposal was the lack of friction that it caused within the EC, except from the resignation of Des Wilson.

Philp recommended the merger to the EC. His reasons were four-fold. As the government’s interest waned in the field of family poverty, at least in public (see chapter 6.2.2), Philp believed there was a need to reach a wider audience. CPAG had to admit that “in some respects it had not achieved as much as it would have wished”. He argued that the CPAG had tended to concentrate its education

efforts” on a small section of the community which is knowledgeable, socially conscious and influential - ministers, government departments, universities and social workers”. He argued that although this might produce “rapid action” it was “precarious” without educating the broader public because ministers are frightened to take action if it is misunderstood by their own supporters (Philp memo, 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, PTA p.1).⁹³ Philip’s answer was that the CPAG should give its attention firstly to rising public awareness of family poverty and support for the measures to ease the problem. The merger with the populist Shelter would give CPAG the resources with which to reach the wider audience.

Another reason was the time that CPAG devoted to fund-raising, administration and local groups. CPAG’s *raison d’être* was to produce, through the analysis of research, the facts and policy statements needed by those engaged in the propaganda and education of public opinion. The merger with Shelter would free the EC to discuss the policy issues (Philp memo, 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, PTA p.2 and 4). In addition Philp and Des Wilson argued that Shelter and CPAG not only had the same aims but were dealing with the same people (Philp 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, PTA p.2 and Des Wilson interview). They were both smallish groups, calling on the same resources for support and each setting up separate administrative structures. The duplication was wasteful and even harmful to the causes served. Closer association could prevent this (Philp memo, 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, Essex p.2, Des Wilson interview). However, the crucial reason was finance. In 1968, CPAG was in the red. There were serious doubts that charitable trusts would continue in their support for much longer⁹⁴ (Philp 30.11.68, file 2, box 65, PTA p.3) and that CPAG could continue to survive on its own (Veit Wilson interview).

This view was countered on the EC by Townsend and Harvey. After devoting three years to the development of CPAG as a pressure group they were loath to see it lose its independence and identity (Townsend, Philp and Veit Wilson interviews). They also raised two more practical objections. CPAG was an expert pressure group, the main reason why Shelter was interested was that it would be

⁹³ Here he was referring to clawback which caused anger amongst men whose wage packets shrunk as their wives’ family allowances increased.

⁹⁴ Trusts like the Rounder charitable trust made it clear to CPAG that their funding was only prime pumping for new organisations to help them start and then it was up to the group to find its own income.

able to obtain the academic eminence of CPAG easily (Des Wilson interview). There was a fear that the down-side to populist appeal would be the tarnishing of the expert reputation (Des Wilson interview, EC minutes 17.1.69, file 3, box 65, PTA⁹⁵). There was also some concern that homelessness and bad housing was one problem and family poverty another. Although the same people might have been affected by both, the two issues belonged to two different policy communities. Thus there was a belief that the two groups might actually achieve more individually than together (Philp interview).

Despite the seriousness of the decision, it raised very little controversy. The EC minutes lack note of lengthy discussion. The crux of the matter was that no-one was particularly enthusiastic about the merger. The main concern was the finances, which it was hoped would improve. There was simply a belief on the EC that although the advantages were very real, the loss of independence was too great a price to pay (Veit Wilson interview). Thus what should have been a contentious issue was resolved with only the loss of Des Wilson. Given the later improvement in CPAG's finances, it may have been the right decision for CPAG. Yet, an expert policy committee did have to spend its time on administrative issues and CPAG was not able to begin to appeal to a populist audience until the 1970s (see chapter 8). Given that the hypothetical alternative is impossible to construct, it would be futile to make judgements about whether or not CPAG made the right decision. What is important for the development of CPAG was that it was able to take such an important decision without internal strife.

4.2.1.2 The Role of Democracy in CPAG

The complicated internal structure that CPAG developed gave it the veneer of democracy. However this democracy was largely illusionary, with few contested elections and a large number of co-options. Whilst CPAG was a small group with few branches, practically all members with an active interest and a willingness to make frequent trips to London could get on the EC. However, by 1972 the group had grown. Some non-academics such as Sean Creighton and John Ward wanted to move CPAG towards being more of a welfare rights service orientated group.

⁹⁵ The debates absence from the minutes means that grounds for refusal are not documented. This reason was actually raised in response to the limited proposal of the joint journal.

In order to achieve this they needed to break the academic self-renewing oligarchy's (made up of the core, co-optee and core branch groups) hold on the EC. Thus they started to push the subject of democracy onto the BC's agenda. Central to their argument was their desire to see the EC to operate as a forum for representatives from various regions of the country. They also wanted a better balance between academics and non-academics.

Veit Wilson argued that CPAG should not be democratic, as it was not an organisation which represented the views of a section of the population. Instead it was an expert lobbying organisation which used academic research and evidence to promote solutions to policy makers. EC members represented expertise not constituencies (Veit Wilson 1972 p.1-3). For Veit Wilson, CPAG's "material [wa]s the best expert evidence and not an aggregation of attitudes ... " In an analogy with a football team, he argued that CPAG was playing in the big league and just as it would be absurd for the supporters club to elect or dictate to the team, so was it for the CPAG. He argued that subscribers should be renamed supporters and play a supportive role with their "purses, voices and legs" (Veit Wilson 1972 p.5). For him, "a self-perpetuating expert oligarchy" was preferable to an elected EC of people "representing local bourgeois interests of mere warm-hearted uninformed concern for the poor" which would lead to the "political emasculation of CPAG" (Veit Wilson 1972 p.5) An open EC would lead to the possibility of take-over, something echoed by Townsend a year later (Townsend to Creighton 13.8.73, box 69, PTA).

The pro-democracy camp were incensed by this attack. Sean Creighton argued that an "elite" EC would be too distant from the real needs of the poor (Creighton 1972, file 6, box 65, PTA p.1). Creighton, supported by Ward, wanted a very different structure to CPAG for ideological and tactical reasons. In their opinion, CPAG's EC should be composed of representatives from different regions (each region having a representative on the EC). There should also be six national members of the EC who would be voted for by postal vote. The academic monopoly on the EC would be broken in two ways. Firstly, there would be a limit to the number of academics and social administrators allowed on the committee. Secondly, there would be an election of three members at the AGM to rectify any

imbalances. Finally, as the EC meetings would be open, there would be no need to co-opt members to the EC for their expertise (Creighton to Townsend 23.7.73, box 69, PTA).

Creighton, Ward and others had strong reasons for demanding democracy and openness in all organisations. They were certainly right about the dominance of academics, which accounted for at least 85% of the EC after the AGM in May 1973 (appendix E.3.1). Not only were academics the dominant group but also the most likely to remain on the committee the longest. Academics accounted for over half of all EC members who remained for more than two years and two-thirds of all those remaining for more than four years.⁹⁶ However, Creighton and his supporters' ideas would have also helped them tactically gain more power over the organisation. A postal vote would have meant that more ordinary grassroots members, a majority of whom may not have been academics, would have voted.⁹⁷ Thus non-academic candidates would have had a better chance of success. The limitation on academics would have also have meant more people like Creighton and Ward being elected to the EC and therefore more support for their ideas about the group's role.

Townsend made clear to Creighton that these ideas could not be implemented for three practical reasons. Firstly, postal votes were costly, cumbersome and time consuming, a serious issue for a shoe-string organisation with relatively few staff. Secondly, electing at AGM would make the risk of take-over even greater. Thirdly, the idea of open meetings to avoid co-option would have restricted the frankness of discussions at the EC as the people present would be under no obligation to CPAG. Furthermore, the meetings could be disrupted by groups antagonistic to the CPAG (Townsend to Creighton 13.8.73, box 69, PTA).

However a more fundamental reason for resisting a democratic structure was that CPAG was clearly a promotional group. The sum of the group was not its membership but its expertise. CPAG never represented anybody. Instead it was a group of experts that worked to bring the problem of poverty to the attention of the government, the media and other institutions. Veit Wilson's suggestion that

⁹⁶ This statistic is derived from an examination of all members of the EC over the period 1965 to 1974.

⁹⁷ Although not representative the Worsfold survey indicates that a majority of branch members were not academics (Worsfold 1971 p.344).

members should be reduced to mere supporters, whilst the experts took control was justifiable. Other promotional groups such as Greenpeace use this model, and are run in an 'authoritarian' manner by experts with the rank and file having little input into the decision-making process (Grant 1995 p.136). Thus given that CPAG supporters were attracted by the expressive benefits of CPAG, most were happy to pay their subscription and gain the material benefits. Most had no interest in voting or being active. Of the minority of active members, the vast majority were content at their local level.

In the end little changed. The members retained voting rights that the majority never used. The BC remained largely a powerless talking shop. The EC continued to co-opt other experts. The main reasons for this was that the resultant compromise benefited CPAG more than the other alternatives. It was difficult to take voting rights away from the rank and file members. Given that subscriptions accounted for a sizeable proportion of CPAG's finances from 1971, alienating membership could not be risked and any members that bothered to attend an AGM that might be the other side of the country were more than armchair activists. In addition, the election of people like Creighton to the EC, although non-conformist, did present not only new ideas to the EC but also a direct experience of working with the poor on a daily basis. Yet, at the same time, the vast majority of the EC must have recognised that their power lay in their expertise. Hence the predominantly expert EC had to be maintained through what might be termed a self-renewing oligarchy of academics. Although cumbersome, the existing machinery therefore managed to strike a balance between accountability and expertise.

4.2.1.3 The Tension Between the CRO and CPAG

After 1969, Field was the director of CPAG, responsible to the EC. Audrey Harvey and her successor Stuart Weir were directors of the CRO. Immediately there was a tension. Although the CRO was autonomous, it still had to work with CPAG in order to present an united front and to share information. Therefore, when the CRO under Harvey issued its own press release on the same day as a CPAG release the level of tension rose. As the CRO developed some independent income from welfare rights courses, Weir fought harder for more independence

(Weir interview). In short the fact that the directors were expected to work together with no-one in overall control resulted in minimal co-ordination and co-operation.

In addition, all concerned were ambitious with strong personalities. Harvey saw the CRO as her pet-project and was not going to allow a much younger newcomer like Field to interfere. Weir took the job on the understanding that he was going to be the director of this offshoot organisation and resented Field's interference. Field was in charge of the day-to-day running of CPAG. In order to gain the information he needed for lobbying, he had to have some control over the CRO's work. As the roles of the two directors overlapped, even deciding who should speak to the media was an area of tension (Weir interview). Personal factors, as well as tension between roles, led to friction between Field and his deputy Streather. This led to an alliance being formed between Weir and Streather and between Field and the CRO/Legal Department lawyer, Henry Hodge (Weir, Streather, Bull, interview). The alliance between Weir and Streather led to some valuable efforts at creating links and passing resolutions at the 1972 and 1973 Labour Party conferences. However, in general the tensions hindered the vital co-operation between the CRO and CPAG.

4.2.1.4 Relationship between the EC and the Staff

The striking thing about the relationship between the staff and the EC was the high level of co-operation and good will. There are two main reasons why this should have been so. Firstly, the senior staff and the EC had similar backgrounds. Some of the staff had served on the committee before and some served after leaving paid employment with the group. All the senior staff had been national members of the CPAG before employment and some had been involved in branch work.⁹⁸ Therefore the staff and the EC in general shared some of the same values.

Secondly, the staff were young. Hence, with few domestic responsibilities and ambitions for the future, they were willing to accept relatively low pay (Streather,

⁹⁸ Audrey Harvey had been on the EC since the Group's formation and in early 1970 took over the directorship of the CRO. Tony Lynes had also been involved before his secondment to the MPNI and then became secretary. Tony Lynes was on the EC after resigning as secretary although he refused co-option in June 1971. Robin Simpson was elected onto the EC after leaving the group's employment. Jane Streather and Stuart Weir were involved in branch work

Weir interviews). Although there was some anger when the link between the staffs' pay and academic scales were broken (Weir interview), the real strife over pay and conditions came later in the 1980s (Bradshaw interview). In 1972 Streather set up a branch of the TGWU for CPAG (and other voluntary workers in London). It made little difference to pay (Streather interview). Thus apart from the rather bitter departures of Holroyde (see chapter 3.2.1) and Harvey (see chapter 5.2), the overall picture of EC and staff relations was one of tranquillity.

4.2.2 The Development of Branches

4.2.2.1 Why Branches Were Formed

The branches were not instigated by the centre. Indeed there was opposition to the idea of branches from the secretary, Lynes, and the present and future chairs, Philp and Townsend (Philp to Townsend 29.7.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). CPAG simply never had the resources to service branches (Lynes interview). The secretary/director was responsible for organising and implementing CPAG's lobbying campaign. As far as Lynes and Field were concerned this was the priority for CPAG. Servicing and accommodating branches used precious resources in terms of both finance and time.

The early branches were centred on universities in the large provincial cities: Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool (Merseyside). Scotland, too, very quickly set up its own centre in Edinburgh and branches proliferated. The main reasons for this was their distance from London. CPAG members like David Bull in Manchester, Rosemary Vear in Liverpool and Iain Jordan in Edinburgh were encouraged to sell *Poverty* (Bull interview). However, they and the people in their universities to whom they sold were not satisfied by this limited role. They wanted to discuss what they were selling and have a channel for their ideas to reach the EC. As much power was held locally through the local authorities and local SBCs, they felt that lobbying at a local level could be productive (Bull and Bradshaw interviews). Therefore, despite Lynes' opposition, Vear established the Merseyside CPAG and Manchester followed (Field in Kelly forthcoming). They flourished with strong committees and large memberships. In contrast, Birmingham, which had been established by Harriet Wilson, floundered because

there was not a strong grassroots movement to set up a branch. The branch had been imposed. After the first few branches had been formed a momentum gathered. More lecturers and students at other universities followed the example of the early branches and gradually the trend expanded to social and community workers in the capital, as well as in provincial towns and even in predominately rural areas. Help and advice could increasingly be gained from the centre and other branches. As key branch members left one area, they often acted as catalysts for the formation of branches in other areas.⁹⁹

Later, as CPAG matured, the inevitability of branches coupled with their usefulness in producing data and research meant that CPAG had to employ a branches organiser. The hard-pressed director could not be expected to service the branches in addition to his other work. Branches proliferated in early 1973 when the deputy director, responsible for branches, was able to assist fledgling branches. Thus CPAG was forced from a position of not wanting branches through to having to tolerate them, through to having to service and encourage them, as they became important sources of information.

4.2.2.2 The Advantages and Disadvantages of Branches

The branches came with three substantial costs. The first was financial. The branches contributed very little directly to the national CPAG (see appendix E.7.2). In paying for the deputy director the national group was subsidising the branches. The second was the time devoted by the director and the EC to branches matters, hence the need for the deputy director (Lynes and Field interviews). The third was the “inverted” priorities of some of the branches.

CPAG was clearly on the lobbying end of the Whiteley and Winyard continuum (see chapter 2.1). However some of the branches, most notably Wandsworth, were primarily service groups. Although they did submit welfare rights data to the national group and carried out a small number of surveys, their main priorities were welfare rights information provision and supporting representational movements of the poor, mostly in the form of a CU (see chapter 5.2). Creighton claimed that Wandsworth did support CPAG’s aims and contributed data and

⁹⁹ Bristol’s branch was not formed until after David Bull from the Manchester branch moved to Bristol.

finance to the national group (Creighton 1972 p.2). Yet Veit Wilson made clear that branches should have to agree to clear CPAG objectives and guidelines if they wished to stay branches (Veit Wilson 1972 p.5). Veit Wilson was right to direct attention to this point because the biggest potential liability of branches was their ability to discredit or misrepresent CPAG. A branch that concentrated on service provision would give the impression in its locality that CPAG as a national body were also primarily about services. Hence it would detract attention from the main goal. Despite this danger, however, the EC agreed not to enforce guidelines on branches (EC minutes 17.11.72, file 6, box 65, PTA). This prevented strife within CPAG but left it with this danger.

Despite the very real costs and dangers discussed above, CPAG branches were on balance an asset to the national group. They attracted members, both potential EC members and the rank and file. The overlap between these members and the Labour Party proved crucial for forcing CPAG issues on the Labour Party's agenda. They produced research and undertook welfare rights. The former the group could not have afforded if it had to pay for it. The latter was useful for providing cases for the test case strategy and data with which the director could lobby government and the SBC. Their educational and publicity work raised CPAG's profile. The lobbying of local authorities and SBC offices could be influential both directly and indirectly. Anyway, given that provincial members wanted branches to channel their energies, there seemed little CPAG could do in practical terms to stop the development of branches short of excluding a large number of their most enthusiastic supporters and EC members.

4.2.3 Strategy Tensions

4.2.3.1 Promotional or Facilitator of Representational Groups

CPAG was clearly a group *for* not *of* the poor. This was not the only strategy open to those wanting to tackle poverty. In Britain the CUs and in the USA the Welfare Rights Movement involved claimants in the campaign against poverty. The CUs were in reality a fluctuating number of local groups which were loosely federated in the National Federation of CUs (NFCU). There were in fact two distinct types

There he met a number of interested people and together they formed a branch.

of group within the federation the first followed the model of the Birmingham Claimants Union which had been established in 1969 by a group of radical social work students. The second took their inspiration from Joe Kenyon, an unemployed miner. The fundamental difference between the two types of group was that whereas the former questioned that work was only valuable in the formal paid sphere, the latter saw the solution to poverty through full employment and well-paid jobs.

Across the Atlantic, the Welfare Rights Movement was started by a clique of radical civil rights leaders who agreed that there was a need for the poor to claim their rights and force the government to change the discretionary system of benefits in place (Piven and Cloward 1975). Across the country, but especially in Massachusetts and New York, white, college-educated radicals set about organising poor, black, less well-educated single mothers to claim their full social security rights often through sit-ins and protests (Ballis 1974 p.71, Piven and Cloward 1975 p.411). The women were encouraged to formally join the organisation and elect their own leaders. Simultaneously there was a number of test cases, which challenged and often over-turned social security policy, which was unhelpful to the claimants. This test case strategy was closely aligned to the more general Welfare Rights Movement.

The main reasons why the subject of becoming a representative group never even reached CPAG's agenda were both ideological and practical. Ideologically, CPAG's believed that poverty was the fault of the government and that it was the government's responsibility to solve this problem, not the poor's. Practically, CPAG realised that the poor were not a homogenous group and that a group as small as CPAG would never be able to organise significant numbers. It was the lack of homogeneity and the distinction between unemployed (or indeed low paid) workers and other long term claimants (such as single mothers) and their different attitudes to paid work that created the chasm (Rose 1975 p.187, 192-3, Bradshaw and Stacpoole interviews). In addition, especially in the field of welfare rights, most of the poor did not want to be empowered to fight the system but to be helped to use it effectively (Rose 1973 p.194, Ballis 1974 p.55, North London CU

1977 p.192.¹⁰⁰ If the poor were invited to run the organisation and the EC, CPAG would have lost one of its most valuable assets: its expertise. It was this expertise which enhanced its acceptability with the government (Dean and Wendt interviews).

4.2.3.2 The Breadth of Policy

CPAG had been set up very much around the issue of family poverty and the need to eradicate it in a non-stigmatising way. In 1972 Malcolm Wicks¹⁰¹ submitted for discussion a paper outlining his ideas for the future of the CPAG (Wicks 1972). Wicks argued that CPAG should adopt a wider approach. He suggested incomes, social security, health, education, housing, the law and a vague “etc” as possible issues. Arguing that poverty could not be compartmentalised, he favoured an Inequality Action Group¹⁰² (Wicks July 1972 p.1). According to his analysis CPAG had concentrated on being a critic of the SBC and of the means test. He believed that this had led to an emphasis on relatively small groups of the poorest and a neglect of the much larger groups of the poor. This emphasis was not only wrong *per se* but it was damaging to the cause as it reinforced the view that poverty was a problem for only small minorities. “...The poorest [would] only get improvements when working people as a whole [became] interested in their cause, which in many ways they [would see] as their cause too” (Wicks June 1972, p.3). Recognising that the CPAG could not talk about everything, he argued for concentrating on a small number of issues within a larger framework, for example tax credits (and family allowances), the Housing Finance Bill (see 1.4.2) and SB.

Yet, it was important for the group to stay focused. Field pointed out that there were “numerous” examples of successful groups with limited goals but not of those that “hankered after being a political movement” (Field 1972b p.4). There are three main reasons why this should happen. Firstly, few groups had the financial and staff resources to broaden the campaigns. CPAG, in 1972, was a small organisation with a total income of only £18,657, which allowed very little

¹⁰⁰ The North London CU argued that this was inevitable at first because the education system and society emphasised individualism rather than collectivism and the social security system encouraged dependency and passivity (1977 p.192).

¹⁰¹ For biography see Appendix A

margin for surplus. It simply never had the resources to broaden the scope of its activities (Field 1972b p.4). Secondly, a campaign was likely to get attention if it was focused. A group had to prioritise what it thought was the most important issue and concentrate on that. A pressure group that was too broad, perhaps spreading itself thinly over several policy communities, would confuse policy-makers and the media. Thirdly, CPAG, like other pressure groups, was a coalition of people who believed that the main issue was the problem of family poverty and thus the need to raise, in a non-stigmatising way, family endowment for the poor. In contrast, on other issues such as inequality, housing, education and the law, there were disagreements. Pressure groups give people, with differing or similar views on other subjects, the opportunity to concentrate their energies on what is for them the important issue. Political parties are the channel for reforming society.

In any case, CPAG did show a secondary interest in issues other than the means test and the SBC. CPAG's central concern was universal cash provision for children to ease family poverty and for a reduction in means testing which would ease the poverty trap and the wage stop. It opposed the Housing Finance bill for aggravating the poverty trap and creating yet another means test (Wicks 1971 p.7-10). *Poverty* had always dealt with a wider number of issues than the 1965, 1967 or even 1970 memoranda (see appendix E.9). Although until 1970 the memoranda of the CPAG had centred on the issue of family endowment, thereafter they were broader in their interest. *Poverty and the Labour Government* not only discussed the need to raise family allowances but also the need for a minimum wage. The memorandum to the Chancellor of that year (joint with the NFOAPA) argued not only for the tax free higher family allowance but also for a special supplementary benefit for handicapped children. Memoranda to the Heath government centred on family endowment and made clear the implications for the poor of some of the government's other policies. Memoranda were also submitted to a number of committees of enquiry. CPAG submitted evidence to the Fisher Committee on Social Security Abuse (Field and Grieves 1971), the committee overseeing the Legal Advice and Assistance Bill (CRO 1971) and the Ross Panel on Population

102 Wicks does not actually say this directly. He argues that "Some say what is really required is an Inequality Action Group. The case in favour of such a development is obvious ... " It is fair to conclude that

(September 1970, Box 72, PTA). Pamphlets were written on issues such as the wage stop, cohabitation and later strikers' rights (see appendix F.1.1). Therefore CPAG was at least bringing other relevant issues to the attention of readers of *Poverty*, its other publications and the government, even if it concentrated its efforts on the core issue of non means tested family endowment.

A related issue was CPAG's non-partisan stance. Any kind of movement towards an Inequality Action Group would damage the CPAG's credibility amongst Conservatives. CPAG's previous success in attracting a number of Conservatives to the cause had been due to its narrow range of issues (Philp interview) and Field outlined in an earlier paper that redistribution aimed at lifting the poorest was acceptable to both parties (Field 1972b). However if CPAG believed that a successful anti-poverty campaign entailed much less inequality in society, then the Heath government had made it abundantly clear that it was "violently opposed" to such an idea (Field 1972a p.7). Although Field left the decision open to the EC in his paper, he assumed that the EC would retain the bi-partisan stance. Veit Wilson was more direct in his argument that the CPAG should be a "lobby that the Tories find it hard to ignore because it talks to them in the language of their own superficial ideas" (Veit Wilson 1972 p.2). There were two main reasons for maintaining this bi-partisan stance. Firstly, in 1972 with the possibility of at least another two years of the Heath government, CPAG had to maintain the two party stance in "the hope of some gravy for the poor" (Field 1972a p.7). Secondly, groups which are partisan have no credibility with the other party whilst it is in power. Conversely they may have less leverage over the party they support whilst it is in power because the "supported" party does not need to give anything in terms of policy to keep the group's support as the group has no other means of obtaining its aims (Grant 1995 p.83).

Lynes has recently stated that he "was not...particularly interested in poverty...[He] was, however, very interested in inequality and that was what it all seemed to [him] to be about" (Lowe and Nicholson 1995 p.625). Yet, under Lynes, efforts were made to cultivate all political parties. He met in 1966 Mervyn Pike and John Pardoe, the respective shadow MSS spokespeople of the

the "some" was composed of him and his supporters

Conservative and Liberal Parties (Secretary's Report Dec 1966, file 1, box 65, PTA). Hence under Lynes CPAG was non-partisan, despite Lynes' own underlying beliefs.

4.2.3.3 *A Family or a (Family) Poverty Group?*

A policy decision that was never really discussed within the EC was whether CPAG should be a *family* or *family poverty* action group. This was because the two possible advocates of an alternative approach resigned before they could make much of an impact. In France, there was a strong family movement which pushed for horizontal equity between families and the childless. In Britain this issue was taken up by Margaret Wynn, who left CPAG after two months because she wanted CPAG to be more about the family than just family poverty (Lowe and Nicholson 1995 p.630).¹⁰³ Sir John Walley was also a prominent advocate. Peter Moss,¹⁰⁴ who only occasionally attended EC meetings, argued for the group to develop Wynn's line about "investment in the future" through children. He urged the group to find out more about foreign family groups and, if appropriate, set one up in Britain, in order to press for a proper family policy, whilst CPAG dealt with family poverty (EC agenda 27.11.70, file 4 box 65, PTA). However he was never involved strongly enough on the EC to ensure a change of policy. Field was later to reflect on the limitations of centring on poverty rather than children and argued they ignored the beneficial effects of the sharp elbows of the middle class (Field 1982 p.146).

However an emphasis on family income rather than poverty was not debated in the late 1960s or early 1970s within the EC or CPAG in general. Veit Wilson argued for the retention of the word *child* for sake of continuity and because children were the most sensitive indicators of deprivation. He argued that CPAG should continue to campaign for the childless and aged (Veit Wilson 1972 p.2). Wicks wanted to alter the name of the group and Wandsworth branch did omit the word *child* because it did not reflect its activities (Creighton 1972 p.2). It was accepted however by practically all of the EC that they were a poverty group and

¹⁰³ Wynn was on of the signatories to Harold Wilson's letter in December 1965 but only because her letter asking to be removed from the list came too late.

¹⁰⁴ An academic and a member of Merseyside branch who was intermittently on the EC between October 1969 and January 1971.

not a family group. Philp argues that in the 1960s whereas people might have been interested in poverty or inequality, the family was a “non-starter” (Philp interview). Certainly the concern about poor, large families and the concerns in the 1960s that Britain could become over-populated (Cmnd 5258 p.2) meant that there was little interest in horizontal redistribution from the childless to families to be more equitable at all income levels.¹⁰⁵

4.3 Conclusions

Between 1966 and 1974, CPAG evolved from being a tiny group with Lynes, “...a bicycle, a typewriter and a half-time secretary” (Lynes in Kelly forthcoming) to an organisation with branches and autonomous Legal Departments. In 1969, a new chair and a new director took over the leadership of the EC. The style of leadership shifted from being one of seeking consensus on the EC to one of directing the EC. To an extent this was as result of different personalities. However it was also the result of the growth of CPAG and hence the need for quicker decisions and responses.

The structure was characterised by compromise. The old coalition of social workers and academics had given way to academic dominance. By 1972 the few non-academics on the EC were frustrated by an EC which took CPAG in the direction of research and lobbying rather than concentrate on welfare rights for its own sake, hence there was a debate over democracy. This debate was resolved by a compromise between democracy and oligarchy because it remained the best way of gaining some new ideas and contact with the membership but at the same time keeping an expert EC. Thus any attempt to restrict the role of membership, which in practical terms was already restricted by the lack of postal ballots, was rejected. The same was true for the calls from Veit Wilson to rein in the activities of the branches. Although it was true that the branches were a drain on resources and risked misrepresenting CPAG, it was also true that the branches’ contribution to CPAG in terms of research projects, welfare rights data and cases, publicity and

¹⁰⁵ At the first meeting it was feared that advocating an increase in family allowances would be politically difficult given the debate about overpopulation (Minutes 5.4.65, file 1, box 65, PTA). This concern led to the inclusion in the first memorandum of a suggestion that family allowances could be delayed until the child was one or two years old to prevent increasing the birth-rate (Memorandum to Houghton 30.6.65 p.3, file 1, box 65, PTA). The fact that France had very generous family allowances in the 1960s was a reflection of the fact that it feared that it was under rather than over populated, although it had higher birth rates.

education was incalculable but very substantial. CPAG could not afford to alienate its branches.

When issues were discussed on the EC they did not attract long-lasting bitterness. The attempted merger with Shelter debate, although a major decision, was not acrimonious because all EC members favoured independence and those supporting the merger were only in favour on practical grounds. The decision of whether CPAG should be a *family* or *poverty* group was never seriously discussed because all the main advocates either left the EC or were not in positions of strength. In any case the majority of the EC was interested in poverty rather than family policy. The calls for CPAG to become an *inequality* rather than *poverty* group, despite having an EC advocate, were rejected because the bi-partisan approach was well-grained in CPAG strategy. The EC agreed with Field that to sacrifice this could lead CPAG into the wilderness. The debate led to no long term tensions and no resignations. However perhaps the most important debate of all, whether CPAG should be a group *of* or *on behalf of* the poor was never debated on the EC. CPAG at its outset had been an expert pressure group. Even those concerned with democracy and representation were only interested in introducing alternative poverty experts on to the EC not the poor themselves.

5 Chapter Five: Welfare Rights

The pursuance of welfare rights was an integral part of the work of the national and local CPAG. This chapter addresses three basic questions. What was meant by welfare rights? How did the pursuance of welfare rights interact with CPAG's other activities and goals? Were resources spent on welfare rights well used? The first section of this chapter sketches some definitions of welfare rights. The second analyses what welfare rights meant at CPAG's centre. The third discusses welfare rights at a local level. The fourth examines the different approaches to welfare rights and the motivations behind them. The fifth reflects on the role welfare rights played within CPAG.

5.1 *Defining Welfare Rights*

The term welfare rights was first used in Britain by Tony Lynes in an article for *Poverty* in late 1967. Lynes had just returned from a visit to the USA and was impressed by the welfare rights movement that he found there (Lynes 1967d p.6). The term became an umbrella term for a number of activities and ideologies aimed at ensuring that claimants of social security received the maximum amount of social security benefits possible. This was despite the fact that the American term "welfare" corresponded to the term 'social security' in Britain. Welfare rights activities were taken up by insider pressure groups such as CPAG, DIG and Shelter, by more militant outsider groups such as the CUs and increasingly by the local authorities, who began to create the new profession of welfare rights officers.

The 1966 Social Security reforms led to the foundation of the SBC. Means tested SB was confirmed as the right of every citizen. Thus if a person qualified for the benefit according to the premises laid down in the act, s/he was eligible for the basic scale rate. The only exceptions were the reductions in the allowance for the wage stopped and those who were at fault for losing their job. However, the Act laid down only broad guidelines and the implementation was at the discretion of the independent quango, the SBC. In an organisation that was as large as the SBC, with very junior front line officers, it was inevitable that the legal discretion would be filled by a network of administrative and policy rules (Lewis 1975 p.76). These

rules were collated in an internal guide called the “A” Code, which formed the basis for local officers’ decisions in determining the right to benefit *per se* and the right to discretionary extra payments. These could be in the form of an extra allowance, Exceptional Circumstances Allowance (ECA) or a lump sum payment for a bulky purchase, Exceptional Needs Payment (ENP).

There was a second tier to the decision-making of the SBC and MSS of tribunals. In the case of NI tribunals precedents could be established and further appeals could be made to the National Insurance Commissioner. Claimants of SB could also appeal against SBC decisions to a SB tribunal. This appeal had the same discretionary powers as the SBC and was obliged only to respect the 1966 Act not the SBC’s internal guidelines. In theory it should not just correct administrative errors of the SBC but look at the case independently or *de novo* (Lewis 1975 p.80). However many tribunals believed that they were bound by SBC rules (Ross 1975 p.105) and given the non-legal backgrounds of the majority of members it was difficult to convince them of legal arguments (Lister 1974 p.6-7). This appeal framework, which had existed in a similar way for NA and before, was not used by the vast majority of claimants. Only six per thousand SB claimants appealed to a tribunal in 1965 (Rose 1975 p.144). Many claimants accepted the SBC’s decision. Many of those who did not were deterred by ignorance of the appeals procedure. Those that did go to appeal were hampered by the lack of advice and advocacy available to them.

Therefore the main activity of those groups involved in welfare rights was the assisting of claimants in their original application to the SBC or NI office and in appealing against its decision. However, the degree to which organisations were willing to assist the claimant and the methods used varied. Bull’s advocacy continuum ranges from the Citizen’s Advice Bureaux (CABx) approach of giving impartial advice to those seeking it, to the protest strategy of SB office sit-ins adopted by the Claimants Unions. In between lie the strategies of passive advocacy, in which the advocate checks the entitlement, and active advocacy, in which s/he questions the decision. This might be within the SBC structure, at appeal or even in the courts (Bull 1979).

Just as the methods varied so did the goals. CPAG, as all organisations involved

in welfare rights activities, had its own particular reasons. However although it might be possible in the short term for a number of goals to be sought by different people in the same organisation, in the longer term this would cause friction. Thus it was necessary for CPAG as an organisation to decide the purpose of its welfare rights activities. Was the goal merely to help the individual claimant, for whom the law had been harshly interpreted? Was it to bring changes in the way the law was interpreted to make the system more generous and therefore change the law through test cases? Was the idea to undermine the system, by showing its incompetence and failure and therefore the need to reform the welfare system (Field and Townsend 1970 p.2)? Or could the system be destroyed by overloading it until it collapsed making way for a radically different system (Piven and Cloward 1975 p.279)? Was the idea of welfare rights to empower the poor to fight for their own rights (Rose 1975 p.152)?

5.1.1 Discretion versus Rights

For CPAG, the stress on SB as a right in the 1966 act was just a start. Central to CPAG's thinking was that means tested benefits in general were undesirable because of the stigma endured by those applying and because ignorance and pride deterred many of the entitled. For CPAG this was one of the main reasons for remaining loyal to the Beveridge ideal of universal benefits.¹⁰⁶ Naturally the disincentive effects of means tested benefits were emphasised to the government, particularly the Conservative government (see chapter 6). However, CPAG recognised that given the large number of means tested benefits, any movement away from them would necessarily be slow. Therefore CPAG, like others in the welfare rights movement, argued for entitlements to SB to be codified and public rather than reliant on the SBC's discretion which was in practice decided by the secret administrative guidelines of the "A" code. These legal rights would be reinforced by claimants having the right to legal advice and advocacy. In practice the strategy was two pronged. Firstly, CPAG lobbied the SBC to make public the "A" code and the government to make legal aid available for appeal tribunals and to provide a network of advice centres (Brooke 1969 and Field 1973b). Secondly,

¹⁰⁶ A key feature of the Beveridge system was that the universal benefits other than family allowances would be conditional on compulsory insurance payments. Many of the benefits that CPAG and other groups were demanding should be universal such as benefits for the disabled at birth could not be made conditional on insurance benefits. Therefore some of the benefits at least would have to be paid out of general taxation.

tribunal successes, which challenged the “A” code, were publicised through *Poverty*. This was followed by a test cases strategy, which attempted to use the higher courts to establish precedents.

Yet there were disadvantages of this movement, as Lynes recognised (Lynes 1969 p.4). Titmuss led the intellectual backlash against the welfare rights movement. He was appalled by the American experience that had alienated the claimants from the process by introducing lawyers and had created a state of inter-personal warfare between the bureaucracy and claimants (Titmuss 1971 p.122). Rights could be taken too far and rigid rules would cause suffering (Titmuss 1971 p.125 and 127). This same line was argued by an Under-Secretary of the DHSS (Wilding 1975 p.62). Lynes’ argument that the advantages of consistency and openness would outweigh the disadvantages cut little ice with the proponents of discretion (Lynes 1969 p.9-11). Yet, the rules of the SBC and its codes made discretion at a local level a myth. Local offices were bound by banding and regulations for heating ECAs and clothing allowances were granted by adhering to form B/0, which was leaked to CPAG (Hodge 1975 p.68-9). Even proponents of discretion recognised that rules were necessary for most areas in order to obtain equity between different offices and areas, and that the expense of discretion meant that it should be restricted to contentious areas (Wilding 1975 p.59-60, Titmuss 1971 p.127).

5.1.2 Other Approaches To Welfare Rights

In Britain, a number of the other single-issue pressure groups were involved in welfare rights. Shelter, like CPAG, had a Legal Department and both Shelter and DIG represented their clientele at tribunals. Like CPAG, they pursued a strategy of active advocacy on the Bull advocacy continuum. The CABx were also involved in giving welfare rights advice and indeed Rosalind Brooke (CPAG’s lawyer) favoured them as a possible official advice and advocacy agency (Veit Wilson 1974 p.4). However, they prided themselves on their impartial advice and refused to become involved in any advocacy. On the militant wing for the CUs the active advocacy approach was not sufficient and the protest tactics of sit-ins and protests were used.

5.1.2.1 The American Welfare Rights Movement

There is little evidence that the American welfare rights movement (see chapter 4.2.3.1) influenced CPAG except from the term itself. Most of CPAG's tactics of active advocacy were very different to the protest strategies followed in the USA. The welfare rights stalls had indigenous roots (Bull and Bradshaw interviews). Only the test case strategy (see chapter 5.2.1) was greatly influenced by the American example. Ironically, those opposed to a "rights" rather than discretion based social security scheme were influenced by the events in America, which led to hostility, rigidity and in many cases lower overall benefits. The CUs were probably more influenced by the American example. Certainly, their protest strategies and the belief that the claimants themselves should be organised were similar. However Joe Kenyon's group was more likely to have been influenced by the 1930s NUWM, which had not only offered active advocacy to its members but also persisted in a protest strategy against the unemployment benefits and indeed the unemployment of the Great Depression (Croucher 1987 p.206 and Elias c.1931).

5.2 Welfare Rights at a National Level

CPAG's first involvement with welfare rights was unplanned and spontaneous. During 1967, Lynes started to represent a small number of claimants at tribunals. His vast knowledge of social security meant that his success rate at Tribunals was 92%, compared to the national average of 20% (Lynes 1969 p.9). Success at tribunals was given as much publicity as possible. A second strand in this movement towards welfare rights was the proposal in early 1967 to produce a welfare benefits guide aimed at social workers. This was taken further by the anti-wage stop campaign. A leaflet was sent to social workers explaining how to approach the local SBC office in the case of a wage-stopped family. Although this campaign was feared enough by the SBC HQ (see 6.4), it was nowhere near as successful as Lynes had hoped (Worsfold 1971 p.92).

In 1968 a distinct approach to welfare rights started to emerge. Abel-Smith outlined in a memorandum to CPAG's EC plans for a distinct Legal Department. It would not fill the gaps in the Legal Aid system but instead use test cases to

create precedents, from which other claimants would benefit and develop the law where it applied to poor families. The Legal Department would gain its cases through working closely with the CABx and the CPAG branches that were now starting to represent claimants at tribunal. The idea was accepted by CPAG and after a desperate struggle to gain funding it finally secured from the Rowntree Social Services Trust a promise of £15,000 over three years (Secretary's report 13.9.68, EC minutes 17.1.69, box 65, PTA). Rosalind Brooke, a trained social worker and lawyer who lectured at LSE, was secured on a part time basis. She was supported by a legal committee of distinguished but sympathetic lawyers.¹⁰⁷ The only major set back was that Abel-Smith, who was to be the chair of the Legal Committee, left the group in the October 1968 to start his new job as Crossman's advisor.

In her plans for the Legal Department Brooke wanted to concentrate on researching the gaps within the system of legal protection for the poor, especially tribunals and housing rights. She also felt that the Legal Department should disseminate information to lawyers and train representatives to work in neighbourhood law centres, for which the Society of Labour Lawyers were pushing. She believed that the Legal Department could offer some practical assistance to cases (EC, box 65 PTA). For the first few months the Legal Department was quiet except for Brooke's successful appearance on a television legal help programme "Can I Help You?" and some individual case work (Legal Department (LD) Report March 1969, box 65, PTA). By June 1969, it was recognised that the Legal Department was simply not getting enough potential test cases to allow it to function as a cutting edge body. However it was hoped that this problem would be ameliorated by the CRO (EC minutes 7.6.69, box 65 PTA).

In May 1969, the EC approved the idea of the CRO, the brain-child of Audrey Harvey. Harvey had suggested an office along the lines of a radical CAB. It would be a drop-in service for a poor area of central London¹⁰⁸. Unlike a CAB it would have the services of a full time lawyer and the back up of the Legal Department,

¹⁰⁷ Including Ben Whitaker, a Labour MP, who had previously been a lawyer.

¹⁰⁸ This local emphasis was restated in another paper of May 1969 (Harvey, May 1969, File 3, Box 65, PTA).

as well as not being dependent on local authority finance. However in contrast to the neighbourhood law centres, which employed three lawyers to one social worker, the CRO would more efficiently use skilled lay workers to filter difficult cases to the lawyer. Finally the CRO would offer facilities for the training of social work students, which would generate some income (Harvey 1969. file 3, box 65, PTA). Rosalind Brooke confirmed in the June of 1969 that the CRO and Legal Department would in her view be mutually compatible (Brooke June 1969, box 65, PTA). Funded by the Rowntree Social Services Trust on a three year basis, it opened for business with three staff, Harvey, David Ardizzone (the Legal Department's full time lawyer) and Mary Morgan, an interviewer, in September 1970.¹⁰⁹ At first there was only one room. Although this situation was improved in 1971, the accommodation was still only a couple of basement rooms rather than a shop-front (EC minutes 19.10.69, File 3, box 65, PTA).

By the end of 1971 the Legal Department and CRO were causes for concern according to the chair of the Legal Committee, Cyril Glasser (a Law Professor at the LSE). Glasser argued that the Legal Department was not fulfilling its role satisfactorily. It should have been advising CPAG on legal matters, undertaking relevant research, producing Parliamentary questions, liaising with sympathetic lawyers in the country, promoting test cases and assisting in the teaching of rights (Glasser 8.12.71, File 5, box 65, PTA). Glasser had previously been concerned that Brooke was losing contact with the Legal Committee (Glasser to Brooke 18.11.70, File 5, box 65 PTA). Yet Glasser accepted that many of its failings were due to the chronic under-staffing. The Legal Department's full time lawyer had been seconded to the CRO, indefinitely, leaving only Brooke and Ruth Lister, a young researcher. Brooke and Lister had been researching the law concerning homeless families and had produced three *Poverty* leaflets. Brooke had produced two *Poverty* pamphlets and between them they had produced three editions of the national welfare benefits guide¹¹⁰ (see appendix F.1). They had tried to bring two cohabitation test cases but the SBC settled out of court (LD Report Jan 1971. File 5, box 65, PTA). Glasser commended the work of Lister (Glasser 8.12.71, File 5, box 65, PTA). Certainly for Brooke to co-ordinate, give legal advice (Lister was

¹⁰⁹ It had been informally operating from Harvey's home since the January.

¹¹⁰ The first was written by Lynes.

not legally trained) and carry out administrative work in one and a half days per week was an impossible task.

The situation regarding the CRO's performance was more serious, as this was not due to simply to inertia and lack of staff but to ideology. The EC started to debate, belatedly, the purpose of the CRO. There were two main ideological differences between the bulk of the committee and Harvey. Firstly, the EC believed by the end of 1971 that the CRO should "be another source of important data for [their] primary activity" (Veit Wilson interview), which was gathering data and arranging evidence to influence the government on the issue of poverty.¹¹¹ Welfare rights were only useful to the group in as far as they furthered that aim (Veit Wilson 1972 p.2). Thus it should be a watch dog for the poor which publicises how the law was applied in relation to the poor and feeding information to the CPAG (Townsend to Weir 19 July 1972, box 69, Essex). It had an obligation to publicise its cases in order to further its causes (Bull₂ interview).

Harvey, however, stuck to her belief that the CRO was in essence a radical CAB. Clients should not have to fill out forms, which asked personal details (Harvey to Townsend 24.3.72). She was unhappy about the research assistant using data from the CRO (EC minutes 22.10.71, box 65, PTA). In any case, argued Harvey, she was hampered in gathering data by legal principle and the sheer work-load of preparing the details for the Legal Committee of test cases. She suggested that the Legal Committee should make their own enquiries (Report on CRO 20 November 1970, Bull's private papers). Brooke and the EC had supported the establishment of the CRO as a way of getting more test cases to the Legal Department. If the Legal Department was to have to do its own enquiries into possible test cases then the CRO had lost one of its main original justifications.

The second source of contention about the CRO was whether it should be a local service or a national expert service, which filtered the most promising test cases to the Legal Committee. For the majority of the committee, it should have been the latter; for Harvey the former (EC minutes 22.10.71, Harvey to Townsend 24.3.72, box 65, PTA). Harvey had originally canvassed the idea of a local CRO to no

¹¹¹ He did not define poverty in relation to SB but in a way similar to that Townsend was using in his study *Poverty in the United Kingdom*.

obvious opposition. However, by summer 1970, not long before the CRO opened properly, Harvey made it clear in *Poverty* that the group wanted “no geographical limits. [It] needed to know what was happening elsewhere” (Harvey 1970 p.17). Considering that the idea had been canvassed to supporters of CPAG as a national service, Harvey’s emphasis on a local service in practice was difficult to justify.

The whole situation was solved by the dismissal of Harvey and the engagement of a new CRO director, Stuart Weir, a former journalist.¹¹² He was given strict instructions of what was expected from the director of the CRO. It was made clear that he was expected to publicise cases, using the press and provide training in welfare rights (Townsend to Weir 19.7.92). Thus Weir set out to make the CRO an expert powerhouse to which other agencies looked for advice (Weir interview). The direct casework of the CRO was substantially reduced by cutting off the means of direct contact, although it still handled some cases. Interesting cases were directed to the CRO from other agencies and from the CPAG branches. The best source of cases was the legal advice page of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sunday People*. Weir had established good relations with these papers (Weir interview). Therefore, when cases came to the CRO, they were given maximum publicity both in the general media and in the specialist legal media and if possible used as test cases. When Brooke left at the end of 1971, she was not replaced and the two legal researchers, Lister and Simpson¹¹³, were amalgamated into the CRO, although the Legal Department remained in name. This meant that the researchers’ access and familiarity with cases was improved.

1972 proved a productive year in research pamphlets for the Legal Department/CRO. Lister produced pamphlets on cohabitation and the wage stop as well as updating the *National Welfare Benefits Guide*. Five short Welfare Reports introducing a range of social security issues, which were by no means restricted to child poverty, were produced by Lister, Simpson and Hodge¹¹⁴, the lawyer. Hodge and to a lesser extent, Drabble (see appendix F.1)¹¹⁵, who had been employed as a CRO interviewer, contributed to the prestigious *New Law Journal*

¹¹² A former Diarist with *The Times* and a local CPAG member.

¹¹³ Simpson joined the Legal Department in December 1971.

¹¹⁴ Hodge replaced Ardizzone in December 1971.

¹¹⁵ Drabble replaced Mary Morgan in November 1972.

and the *Solicitors' Journal*.¹¹⁶ All the staff contributed to *LAG Bulletin*, the Legal Action Group's¹¹⁷ monthly newsletter. These provided a good forum for exchanging information with other agencies about cases. It was also a good way of introducing the subject of poverty law to an often ill-informed legal community. In addition the welfare rights courses, started under Harvey, started to give the CRO a small independent revenue.

One advantage of the CRO and Legal Department was the protection they afforded to CPAG's charity status. CPAG had made the conscious choice to be a charity. This decision offered certain advantages to the CPAG: It could obtain grants from charitable trusts, claim back tax on covenants, receive rating relief and it was not subject to capital gains tax (CPAG submission to the National Council Social Services (NCSS) enquiry¹¹⁸ p.6). However CPAG was subject to the control of the Charity Commissioners and Inland Revenue, which on two occasions required CPAG to justify their actions. The "service" role of the CPAG was useful not only as a way of gathering information for the group but also as a "front" for the campaign. In their submission to the NCSS enquiry CPAG placed first their provision of "advice and advocacy for poor families with financial difficulties, particularly for those on social security benefits" (CPAG submission to the NCSS enquiry p.4). Veit Wilson argues that to the Charity Commissioners the service for the poor was stressed and that the political activities were only on the back of this work. However "this was reversing what it was all about in our minds at any rate" (Veit Wilson interview).

The CRO's welfare rights activities went wider than family poverty. The CRO helped groups as such as the single homeless, ex-prisoners and students, which attracted little public sympathy. An attractive client group is an important asset to any pressure group (see chapter 8.4), children (if not their parents) evoked public sympathy, many of the clients of the CRO did not. The division of CRO and CPAG meant that the wider welfare rights functions were separated to an extent from the lobbying group. The organisation, which lobbied for better universalist

¹¹⁶ E.g. see Hodge (1973) Drabble (1973) (1974) (March 1974) Hodge (1974) Legal Action Group (1973) Editorial Solicitor's Journal (1973) Smith (1973).

¹¹⁷ A legal pressure group campaigning for better welfare rights.

¹¹⁸ CPAG (197?) The Effect of Charity Law on Voluntary Organisations: Submission to the National Council of Social Service Committee of Enquiry, box 72, PTA.

benefits for families was not so directly associated with helping claimants get the means tested benefits that it condemned as inefficient.

Although the 1972 debate had confirmed that the CRO was a national organisation, offshoots developed in Edinburgh, where there were two CROs, one staffed solely by volunteers (Lister 1972 p.22), and one in Belfast, which was formed with the Ballymurphy Tenants' Association (Nationalist) and attempted to cross the sectarian divide by encouraging Loyalists. The Northern Ireland CRO hoped to employ full time staff (Press release 15.6.72, Box 72, PTA). As both Scotland and Northern Ireland had different legal systems and circumstances than England and Wales, this devolution made sense. Cases were filtered to London for test cases. In some respects they performed in a more formal capacity the same role as local branches did in the provinces of England and Wales, in that they gave advice and took appeals.

5.2.1 Test Cases

One of the two main reasons for the establishing of the Legal Department had been to bring test cases. In other words CPAG was going to push for legal changes through the courts. In this strategy, CPAG was influenced by what was happening in America where there had been a series of victories between 1968 and 1970 on issues such as social security payments to children in cohabitation cases, the retention of benefit before a fair hearing and the illegality of state residency clauses (Prosser 1983 p.14-15). Although the American poverty law activists were unable to build on these successes after 1970 (Prosser 1983 p.15), in 1969 the American situation was a source of envy.¹¹⁹ There were, however, some important differences between British and American law, particularly the latter's protection against cases being solved out of court by the administration "buying off" the claimant (Prosser 1983 p.8-13). However CPAG was not the first group to see judicial law as a way of obtaining its ends. The ALRA in the 1930s had taken the route of test cases when the possibility of convincing the government and Parliament looked slight (Hindell and Simms 1972 p.48).

There were essentially three types of test cases relevant to CPAG's strategy in the

¹¹⁹ Though the activists in CPAG would have noted that American law was more amenable to test cases

1970s. Firstly, there were *challenging test cases*. These were cases which challenged the officially accepted interpretation of the law (Partington 1974 p.236). They could either turn on the interpretation of the law or the principle of good administration. For example, whether a body which has discretionary powers has the right to construct rules which inhibit that discretion (Prosser 1983 p.2-3). Secondly, there were *revival test cases*. This was when a disused law is resurrected (Prosser 1983 p.5 and Partington 1974 p.236). Thirdly, there were *policy changing* cases. These tribunal victories did not gain their authority from legal precedent but from the informal precedent when the SBC changed its policy in response to a number of challenges (Prosser 1983 p.6).¹²⁰

The Legal Department was slow to initiate any test cases. In 1972 a further attempt was doomed when the judge refused to challenge the SBC's and tribunal's verdict of cohabitation. Another judge in another cohabitation case in 1973 took a similar line (Prosser 1983 p.28 and 49). However in 1973, CPAG was able to claim the first social security test case success with the Simper case.

Ms. Simper, a deserted wife left with a child, had been given a 35p ECA for heating when she qualified for SB in 1969. When she became eligible for a Long Term Addition (LTA) in 1971, she only received an extra 15p rather than 50p per week. The SBC argued that the LTA replaced the ECA. A tribunal confirmed this. CPAG became involved and using the 1972 Legal Aid act took the case to the divisional court, where the judge agreed with CPAG. The wording of the 1966 act meant that whereas the SBC should ensure that there was no overlapping between LTA and ECAs, there should be no rule of thumb. The story was reported not only in the press but also extensively in the legal journals.¹²¹

At first the legal journals were triumphant that the case meant that the rules of the SBC could be challenged (Smith 1973 p.267, *LAG* March 1973 p.44) and that the new Legal Aid act could be used to monitor tribunals (*Solicitors' Journal*

than British (Prosser 1983 p.8-13).

¹²⁰ Prosser himself dismissed one of his categories, procedural challenges, as having little importance under English law. His other category of political catalysts is difficult to accept because it is supposed to relate to test cases which trigger the government to change the law and create a public debate. Although it is accepted that the government does not change the law every time it is challenged in the courts, it is the intention of the pressure group that all test cases will spark off a public debate.

¹²¹ *LAG* March 1973, *Solicitors' Journal* 1973 vol.117 p.332-3, *New Law Journal* March 22 1973 p.267-8, March 14 1974 p.236-8

Editorial 1973 p.333). However the victory was short-lived. Within a month a clause in the new Social Security Act had reversed the *Simper* decision in law despite CPAG lobbying. Yet there was one small comfort as heating and diet allowances were exempted from this rule. Hence, although the case was a stark reminder that the government can overturn court-made law, the government had to be sensitive to popular groups in society and pensioners were the main beneficiaries of heating allowances.¹²²

The next three test cases were mixed in their success. In 1972, CPAG interested the media in a case of a student who had his SB reduced during the vacation because the SBC maintained that part of his grant was intended for vacations even if he had already spent it (*Guardian* 25.8.72 p.4, *The Times* 19.10.72 p.2). The issue of students and supplementary benefit enjoyed a great deal of discussion in the legal press throughout 1973-4¹²³, sparked by this test case and a number of tribunals. However the test case, coupled with a similar case of a student who had been denied householder rate benefit, failed in 1975. The judge upheld the decision of the SBC, despite acknowledging that the tribunal in the second case may have been erroneous on the point of law. He also argued that the courts should think carefully before interfering with tribunal decisions (Prosser 1983 p.30). However, CPAG, acting jointly with Shelter, was successful in reviving section 99 of 1936 Public Health Act in a test case against a local authority (*Nottingham City DC v. Newton*). The judge agreed that even if the house was designated for demolition the local authority as landlord had an obligation to put right the property (Prosser 1983 p.57).

The test case strategy was slow to start. By 1974 there had only been two successful test cases; *Simper* and *Newton*. The former was strategically important as the SBC's rule of thumb approach to discretion was declared illegal. It was the reinterpretation of an established law. The latter was a more predictable victory and relied on reviving an old law rather than challenging the wording of a law. In that sense it was much less far reaching and controversial. Despite both these victories, CPAG had failed to get a legal definition of cohabitation and failed to

¹²² A large number of heating and diet allowances went to the elderly.

¹²³ *New Law Journal* 1973 Vol. 123 p.449, *LAG* August 1973, *LAG* November 1973 p.248, *LAG* March 1974 p.55.

get the SB rights of students confirmed. These would have been of benefit to CPAG when appearing before appeal tribunals.

There were advantages of the test case strategy. Firstly, test cases, particularly those in the higher courts, created publicity. This meant that poverty law issues were drawn into the mainstream media debate and also into the specialist legal media's debate. Secondly, a success like *Simper* enhanced CPAG's status as a group. This added to the seriousness with which it was taken by the media, government, political parties, other groups, MPs and trades unions. Thirdly, it boosted morale within CPAG. For members and staff, the returns of applying pressure to the government for an improvement in the welfare of the poor was painstaking. People involved in CPAG "worked with greater gusto" when CPAG achieved victories which paid dividends for the poor (Townsend interview).

However, these important advantages were outweighed by the enormous difficulties and disadvantages. One CPAG paper argued that they had been too influenced by events in the USA and needed to re-examine their own needs (Zara 1974). Field also questioned the effectiveness of test cases asking whether it would be a general pattern for them to be countered by legislation. He was also concerned about the fact that the *Simper* case had taken sixteen months to reach the verdict (Field 1973 p.5-7). Certainly, in practical terms the British legal system did create problems. Firstly, the SBC could prevent cases reaching court by reaching out of court settlements with claimants, as in the Legal Department's first attempts at test cases. Secondly, the general nature of the Divisional court was such that it had little experience of poverty law and Judges were unwilling to interfere with the tribunal system (Prosser 1983 p.83-4). In addition, the euphoria after the *Simper* victory was swiftly followed by dismay when a simple clause in the 1973 NI act reversed the judgement. Test cases were only of use if followed up by the lobbying of Parliament and the government (Veit Wilson 1974 p.21. Zara 1974, Partington 1974 p.237). In addition, the non-legal composition of SB tribunals meant that tribunals were sometimes unwilling to accept what was the law and what was SBC policy. One Liverpool tribunal even refused to accept the legality of the *Simper* decision before it was repealed (Burkeman 1975 p.92-3).

5.3 *Welfare Rights at a Local Level*

Welfare rights were an important activity for most branches. Branch welfare rights activities were situated along various points of the Bull advocacy continuum. Many groups produced a guide to welfare benefits in their area aimed at social workers, others produced a leaflet aimed at claimants.¹²⁴ For many groups, however, moving further along the continuum and actively helping the poor claim for benefits and fight appeals for their rights was important (see appendix F.2). The main tool used for advising the poor of their rights were welfare rights stalls.

The first welfare rights stall to appear in a town centre was in Manchester. After an unsuccessful attempt to advise the poor of their rights through collaboration with the Liberal Party (Bull 1970b p.3), the group turned to using a welfare rights stall in two busy locations of the city. The idea was born out of a brain storming session which built on the earlier idea of Oxford CPAG to establish a welfare rights stall on a council estate near the city (Bull, interview). The stall was extremely successful and when Manchester branch stopped the stall, the idea was taken up by students. Manchester CPAG was invited to aid the council in producing a booklet on welfare rights (Bull 1970b p.5-7). It was also able to persuade a local newspaper to publish a comprehensive article on local benefits, thus reaching a large number of people (DBP).

The idea of welfare rights stalls mushroomed. York started its regular, successful welfare rights stall in January 1969. It was closed in June 1970. Other groups such as Hull and Tyneside and later Bristol and Cambridge also set up stalls (Worsfold 1971 p.348, Bull interview, Cambridge PAG newsletter no.1 June 1971). Yet for some branches the welfare rights stall was an end in itself. Wandsworth and Islington set up the welfare rights stalls before the branches themselves were formed.¹²⁵ Wandsworth's stall was incredibly successful. It recorded 1,022 enquiries between April 17 and July 31 1971 (WPAG newsletter 3, 6.9.71), although it handled only a little over half as many in the next four months (WPAG

¹²⁴ York (Bradshaw 1969 p.3) Merseyside (Branches Newsletter 1968 no.1 p.5). Sheffield, Edinburgh and Birmingham were in 1969 working on booklets (Branches newsletter March 1969 no.3 p.2) aimed at social workers while Hull (Branches newsletter Dec. 1968 no.2 p.6), Nottingham (Branches Newsletter September 1968 no.1 p.6) and York (Bradshaw 1969 p.3) produced leaflets for claimants.

¹²⁵ Wandsworth stall opened a month before the branch.

newsletter no.10, 24.2.72).¹²⁶ Of the ten branches in Worsfold's study, welfare rights stalls were the second most cited objective (Worsfold 1971 p.336). However a number of stalls had problems recruiting enough members to staff them (Bristol CPAG newsletter October 1971, Worsfold 1971 p.348-9). Even Wandsworth closed its stalls for a short period to rethink the strategy (Creighton and Hughes 20.11.72 DBP).

Another early development of welfare rights was the representation of claimants at appeals. Building on Lynes' appeal successes, the branches also offered representation at appeal to claimants who contacted them at the welfare rights stalls or who were referred to them (Bradshaw and Bryant 1970 p.5, Bull₂ interview). The number of appeals taken did depend to a degree on the local SBC's attitude towards claimants. Bull argues that he had only once gone to appeal in Manchester because the regional chair of the SBC was willing to sort out cases satisfactorily, as were local managers influenced by such an atmosphere (Bull₂ interview). In Bristol, the situation was very different leading to a conflict situation in which CPAG regularly fought appeals. The idea was not only to benefit the claimant, who often left a represented tribunal with a much better deal, but also to build up a series of quasi-precedents (Bull₂ interview, Prosser 1983). Cases were published in *Poverty* and later in *LAG Bulletin*, thus exchanging information with other advocates. In addition successes were given a great deal of publicity in the local press, which raised the profile of the issue and CPAG. One tribunal success achieved stories in four local newspapers.¹²⁷ This may have been an exceptional achievement but was not the only tribunal to get a large press following. The cases could also be used in CPAG publications. The above case featured in Ruth Lister's pamphlet on cohabitation.

Yet there were dangers even in publicising welfare rights successes. Welfare rights were simply more headline grabbing than another *exposé* of the inadequacy of family allowances, particularly to the local newspapers and especially if those suffering were "deserving". Hence a caring widow, cruelly accused of cohabiting,

¹²⁶ To understand how successful Wandsworth's stall was it is useful to note that York only recorded 1,506 in the eighteen months that it was operating (Bradshaw and Bryant 1970 p.10).

¹²⁷ A case of widow cohabiting in Bristol gained three stories in the main local paper *The Bristol Evening Post* (13.7.72 and 24.8.72), also in the Bristol area *Western Daily Press* (13.7.72), and because of the widow's Wiltshire connection in the *Bath and Wilts Chronicle* (22.6.72) and *The Wiltshire Times* (23.6.72).

received a sympathetic press, as did a report on school uniform grants (see chapter 4.1.5.3). Therefore the impression of CPAG branches' activities could be distorted by what the media reported and the public could be mis-educated into thinking that a better take up of means tested benefits was all that was necessary (Vear 1968 p.5).

The justifications for undertaking welfare rights work as a lobbying group were the same as the national group's for the CRO. It was to provide information on the workings of means tested benefits. Another important reason was that the branch members enjoyed welfare rights work. It gave them immediate satisfaction. If branches were to maintain members they had to accept branch preferences. However, there was always the danger of the welfare rights work overtaking the lobbying role of the CPAG branch. Hence Manchester moved away from its campaign for full entitlements and towards concentrating on family allowances trying to raise the public's awareness in the hope of changing legislation (Manchester CPAG 1968 report DBP p.2). York also concluded that CPAG should not be a social service agency and closed the stall as it distracted from the real causes of poverty (Bradshaw and Bryant 1970 p.8-9). Cambridge PAG recognised that although direct action (service provision) was rewarding because the effects were immediate, it was restricted (Cambridge Poverty¹²⁸ number 1 June 1971, DBP).

Wandsworth and Islington were clearly on the service end of the Bull continuum. For both the welfare rights work was the most important activity. Wandsworth even provided welfare rights courses (WPAG newsletter no.5 31.10.71) and guides to welfare rights stalls (Creighton to branch secretaries 19.6.71 DBP, Creighton *et al* 22.2.72). Although it was recognised that the stalls had an information as well as service role (WPR Discussion paper September 1972, DBP), the service role was the most important activity. Creighton even described the Wandsworth branch as having a community action/political interventionist orientation (Creighton 1972 p.2). Although it did carry out a few surveys, its other main interests were supporting the CU, which it helped set up, and fighting for a

¹²⁸ Cambridge Poverty Action Group's newsletter. Cambridge too rejected the word child although there is no explanation in their literature as to why. Possibly it was simply because Cambridge Child Poverty Action Group or CCPAG was cumbersome.

playground for handicapped children (WPAG newsletter no.19, 20.10.72). Similarly other branches¹²⁹ were involved in activities such as play-groups for deprived but this had no significant value to CPAG as a campaigning group at all (Branches newsletter September 1968 p.1, Exeter 1971, Branches newsletter November 1972). However, Wandsworth was alone in making it clear that it was more than just a branch of the Child Poverty Action Group (WPAG 21, February 1971), asking, “should we see our role as part of CPAG and if so how?” (Wandsworth newsletter July 1971, file 5, box 65, PTA). First, it dropped the word *child* from its title. Later it separated itself almost totally from CPAG calling itself Wandsworth People’s Rights (WPR).

Despite Veit Wilson’s arguments that branches which wished to concentrate on welfare rights and community action should be redefined as not being CPAG branches (Veit Wilson 1972 p.5), the EC did not attempt to force Wandsworth and other such branches back to the lobbying end of the service/lobbying continuum. However Creighton’s ambitions for other branches to follow Wandsworth into becoming local community groups by renaming them as Citizen’s Rights Groups and taking over the functions of local branches Patients’ Associations were ignored (Creighton to Field and Townsend 22.3.72, File 6, Box 65, PTA). CPAG was willing to tolerate the service and community action emphasis of Wandsworth but was certainly not going to promote it.

The militant strategy on the extreme end of the Bull advocacy continuum can have a negative effect on the acceptability of a pressure group. Sit-ins are disruptive and can easily lead to confrontations. Although there is no evidence that CPAG branches staged sit-ins like the CUs, Beltram¹³⁰ remembers that some CPAG branch members insulted SBC staff with taunts such as the “SS” (Beltram in Kelly forthcoming and interview). This may well have been the case in some parts of the country, although there is no evidence of such behaviour in the available archives. On the contrary, a manager of a SBC office in Bristol told Bull that for him CPAG were acceptable because they were polite to the staff and attacked the system. The CUs on the other hand attacked the staff personally, calling them “pigs” (Bull₂ interview). However, if CPAG branches were aligning themselves

¹²⁹ Hull, South Wilts and Exeter were the branches mentioned in the branches newsletters.

¹³⁰ A former civil servant and in charge of local SBCs from 1967

locally with CUs then some of the more militant and even abusive behaviour of the latter might have reflected on the CPAG branch.

5.4 *Conclusion: The Role of Welfare Rights in CPAG*

Despite the morale boosting and publicity generating advantages, the test case strategy was a not an optimum of resources by 1974. It had produced only two successes and even one of those was quickly overturned by the government. By 1974, CPAG had still failed to obtain a legal definition of a householder and cohabitation. Even supporters were beginning to believe that the strategy had been too readily imported from the USA, without due consideration of the different legal systems.

At a local level, welfare rights activities could generate advantages for national CPAG in the form of data for campaigns. Lord Dean, the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Security in the Heath government, argues that it was the fact that CPAG was also “in touch with people who were really feeling the pinch” through their welfare rights work that made CPAG a useful source (Dean interview). Welfare rights work also uncovered possible test cases. It was popular amongst branch members and therefore may have encouraged and maintained membership. Yet, it also diverted branch members’ energy from campaigning work. The greatest risks were branches misrepresenting CPAG’s priorities and of welfare rights activities becoming militant and discrediting CPAG. At a national level, given that the CRO and the Legal Department were separately funded until 1972/3 by the Joseph Rowntree Trust, they diverted few CPAG resources. However, CPAG did have to defend itself against accusations that it believed that full take up of means tested benefits was a solution to poverty (Field and Townsend 1970 p.2).

On balance the welfare rights work of the CRO and the work which filtered through from the branches were of benefit. Similarly, at a local level the fact that CPAG branches could present local authorities with factual evidence gave them credibility. Thus original data from welfare rights helped neutralise the attack that CPAG had no links with those in poverty. The purpose of CPAG’s welfare rights strategy was not to overload the welfare system as with the American welfare rights strategy. This was impossible as CPAG was simply unable to reach the vast

numbers necessary to even contemplate that strategy. The strategy would also bring CPAG towards the militant end of the Bull advocacy continuum, as large numbers of claimants would have to be organised to apply and appeal at the same time. This would risk CPAG's insider status. The main thrust of CPAG's strategy was two pronged. Firstly it was to prove that means tested benefits did not reach all those that were entitled, thus condemning large numbers of people to poverty. Certainly, they were able to demonstrate that despite both the Wilson and the Heath governments spending vast sums on publicity for their means tested benefits as take up rates remained stubbornly low (rate rebates FIS). In addition the high marginal rates and thus the disincentive effects on those receiving means tested benefits were given flesh and bones with the case studies that CPAG discovered through its welfare rights work. Secondly, it was hoped that, given means tested benefits were not likely to disappear completely in the short to medium term, certain test cases discovered through welfare rights work would shift the social security system from one based on discretion to one based on legal rights. CPAG had some success in moving the welfare system in this direction (see chapter 6.4). However the tension between those that agreed with these national goals and those who wanted to make CPAG a welfare rights advice agency led to tensions which were never resolved.

6 Chapter Six: Governmental Targets

CPAG's success depended on the government and the SBC taking positive action from its viewpoint. It could try and persuade the government directly through civil servants and ministers or it could use the political parties, Parliament, the trade unions and the media as channels of influence. This chapter concentrates on CPAG's direct efforts to persuade ministers, civil servants and the SBC commissioners of its views. This chapter examines CPAG's relationship with the first two institutions; the rest are discussed in chapters seven, eight and nine.

This chapter is divided into five main sections. The first reviews the structure and operation of the government during this period. The second discusses the period March 1965 to February 1969 or the period before and during Lynes' leadership of CPAG. It was during this period that family allowances were twice up-rated and responsibility for Social Security was reorganised three times. CPAG's influence over government policy is examined in light of the newly available papers at the PRO. The third section concentrates on the period March 1969 to February 1974 for which Field was the director. The aggressive strategy deployed during the 1970 election year is evaluated. A general picture of CPAG's relationship with the Conservative government is constructed from interviews, CPAG and Conservative Party archival material. A fourth section examines CPAG's relationship with the NAB/SBC, which was linked to the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS). Finally, there is an overall analysis of the extent to which CPAG was able to persuade the government to take positive action to further CPAG's goals.

6.1 The Power Structure

6.1.1 Theories of Power and Influence

Theoretically, there are four types of power: force, authority, manipulation and persuasion (Wrong 1979). Force and manipulation are limited to those groups with political and economic leverage, and authority is connected to those with legitimate, recognised positions (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.112-3). Therefore promotional groups do not possess these types of power. They can, however, influence government through the persuasiveness of their ideas and arguments and

through securing public sympathy via the media (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.114, Grant 1995 p.47). Influence can also be indirect, such as convincing producer groups, parties or influential individuals of its views. Influence might also be gained through an exchange of personnel with Whitehall.

6.1.2 The Power Structures within the Ministry of Social Security and its Power in Government

If CPAG was to persuade government to implement desirable change, it had first to make decisions about where it was going to direct its campaign. Ultimately, important decisions were made at Cabinet level. It was the 1968 departmental reform, amalgamating the Ministry of Health and MSS to form the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS), which gave Social Security issues a direct voice in Cabinet. Previously the Cabinet voice of both the MSS and its predecessor the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance (MPNI) had been the Social Services Over-Lord, who had only a tiny staff.¹³¹

The Ministry itself was answerable to the Minister, initially Margaret Herbison and after her resignation Judith Hart. The Over-Lord post was originally filled by Douglas Houghton, a supporter of the idea of bringing the taxation and benefits systems closer together. However he was replaced in January 1967 by Patrick Gordon Walker and in autumn 1967 by Michael Stewart. In March 1968, Richard Crossman took over the role until he gained direct control over Social Security in the autumn as the first Secretary of State for the Social Services. He was assisted by a junior Minister for Social Security, David Ennals and an Under-Secretary (initially Norman Pentland who had served since October 1964 and later Brian O'Malley from October 1969). His Conservative successor, Sir Keith Joseph, held the job until the 1974 Labour victory. He had no junior Minister but was assisted by an Under-Secretary Paul Dean (see appendices G.1). Thus before 1968, CPAG had to convince both the MSS (or MPNI) and the Over-Lord of the need to raise and reform family allowances. Although the Minister for Social Security would be invited to Cabinet debates concerning Social Security issues, her influence was

¹³¹ Douglas Houghton the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster filled this post between October 1964 and January 1967 by until he was replaced by the Minister without Portfolio, Patrick Gordon Walker. In autumn 1967 Michael Stewart took responsibility and finally between March and October 1968, Richard Crossman co-ordinated the social service departments.

curtailed by her lack of political power (Crossman 1976 p.173).

Although a Cabinet majority was crucial for the success of a reform, it was not enough in itself. Given that the reform needed not only extra expenditure but also fairly radical changes to the taxation system, the agreement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was needed. Following the resignation of James Callaghan in November 1967, Roy Jenkins became the Chancellor. After Iain Macleod's death in July 1970, Anthony Barber took over. Barbara Castle described Cabinet not as a seminar in which reforms were discussed on their merits but as a negotiating table where the ministers fought in the interests of their own departments (Castle 1984). The need for Treasury consent for new expenditure meant that ministers could be persuaded by the Chancellor to reject costly reforms in order to save their own budgets. Many issues including family endowment were referred to Cabinet Committees for discussion. The Public Expenditure Survey Committee (PESC) was chaired by the Chancellor and determined spending levels for each department. The Ministerial Social Services Committee (MSSC), which discussed Social Security issues (and referred them if necessary to full Cabinet) was chaired by the First Secretary of the Treasury. Thus the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his department were in a strong position and were an important target for CPAG.

Within the various Social Security ministries, there were two hierarchies of power: the ministers and the civil servants. Some Labour ministers such as Crossman and Tony Benn were convinced of a conspiracy of the civil servants against them (Crossman 1976 p.243 and Hennessey 1989 p.496-7). Ministers could override their civil servants if they wished to do so (Jones 1987 p.25). However ministers, as non-experts, with a wide range of responsibilities within their department were dependent on the information that the civil service provided. Although the civil service had a strict code of neutrality, the way in which options were presented to ministers could influence the choices that they took. Thus, persuading civil servants of the benefits of a reform could lead to it being presented to a minister as a costed and analysed option. In practice, a group like CPAG had to talk to both ministers and civil servants on key issues. Ministers made the final decision on important issues and attended Cabinet. Thus, meeting the Secretary of State was not only a good publicity stunt but ensured that he

understood the CPAG's viewpoint. More junior ministers had less power (Theakston 1987 p.104) but were responsible for making important if not central decisions. The non-legislative policies of the NAB and its successor the SBC were formulated by the board/commissioners and thus this too was important for CPAG.

6.2 CPAG under Lynes

6.2.1 The 1967/8 Family Allowance Up-rating: A CPAG Achievement?

In October 1967 Family Allowances were raised by seven shillings nearly doubling the value for the second child to fifteen shillings. In April 1968, it was announced that family allowances would increase again by three shillings, on both occasions the increase was clawed back from the standard rate tax payer's personal allowances if s/he was entitled to family allowances. In addition Cabinet had dedicated a large amount of time to discussing family allowances¹³², an issue which had not been discussed at such a level for many years. CPAG played a role in the increasing prominence of family allowances as an issue. However their interventions were not the only factor. Genuine concern on the part of the ministers, sympathetic academic advisers within government, the TUC's concern for the Prices and Incomes Policy, and the lack of an alternative to family poverty also played their part.

Although the issue of child poverty had been simmering within the MPNI¹³³ and the Cabinet subcommittee, the MSSC¹³⁴, it was the Christmas memorandum to the Prime Minister, which turned up the heat. However, as far as the Minister for Pensions and National Insurance was concerned, CPAG was knocking on an open door.¹³⁵ Herbison used the climate created by the Christmas memorandum (and

¹³² Between 15.10.64 and 31.12.69, the issue of family endowment was discussed at eleven Cabinet Meetings all between 17.11.66 and 5.3.68 (Cabinet minutes). This is contrast to the period from 1.1.60 and 15.10.64 there were no Cabinet meetings specifically on the subject of family endowment (PRO index of Cabinet minutes).

¹³³ In the summer of 1965, Tony Lynes, who was seconded to MPNI, produced a paper on means tested family support¹³³ (13.1.66 PIN 17/156 PRO). Lewin, Assistant Secretary of Section D: Special Duties with NI scheme, argued that a means tested family allowance would be an administrative nightmare and the idea came to nothing (13.1.66 PIN 17/156 and 15.8.66 PIN 17/155, PRO).

¹³⁴ Late in 1965 they began to argue that real poverty lay with people not claiming National Assistance (NA) and large families with small incomes (1.11.65 CAB 134 2536, PRO). It was noted that family allowances had not increased since 1957 (1.12.65 CAB 134 2536, PRO).

¹³⁵ She told the Prime Minister that she felt deeply about the issue of child poverty (1.1.66, PREM 13 1834, PRO) and later told the Chancellor that child poverty was her "first concern during the next year or two" (BN

The Poor and the Poorest), to remind the Prime Minister of the urgency of child poverty. She urged that the problem be solved by reducing child tax allowances by the same amount as the increase in family allowances for the standard rate payer, referred to in short hand as “give and take”¹³⁶ (1.1.66, PREM 13/1834, PRO). Despite refusals from the Treasury and the Chancellor, James Callaghan, to contemplate the idea¹³⁷, a give and take addition to family allowances gained support within Whitehall. The MSSC rejected means tested schemes in favour of “give and take”, although it did reluctantly agree that if give and take proved impossible that they would accept a means tested housing allowance. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury reserved the Chancellor’s position (8.11.66 CAB 134/3280). PESC was nervous about cutting meals and milk subsidies without help for large families (14.11.66, PIN 17/155, PRO) and Crossman said that he was only willing to allow the cuts if the Chancellor accepted the Kaldor-Abel Smith (“give and take”) scheme for which Abel-Smith and Titmuss had been pressuring for years (Crossman 1976 p.114). One of the most fervent supporters of higher family allowances through “give and take” was Thomas Balogh, the advisor and friend of Harold Wilson (see below). Even Callaghan accepted the need for some improvement but was “all out for a means tested solution” (14.11.66, PIN 17/155, PRO). Therefore, by the time of the Cabinet debates, everyone accepted that there should be some improvement in family endowment. The question was how much and how.

Callaghan, supported by the Inland Revenue (IR), tried to thwart any Cabinet decision on give and take. He argued that child tax allowances were not a subsidy but an adjustment of tax relating to the ability to pay. The poor should be reached through targeted allowances, either based on family size or means or a combination of the two (c(67) 17 CAB 129/128, (c(67) 17 CAB 129/128, PRO). When these arguments failed to overturn the Cabinet majority in favour of give and take he resorted to more manipulative tactics. One was delay, such as forcing

72/119 PRO)

¹³⁶ For full explanation see chapter 1.4.1.3

¹³⁷ The Chancellor repeatedly told Herbison that it was an impossibility. Initially, he argued that tax allowances were not part of the review (3.3.66 PIN 17/156 PRO), then said that she would have to make cuts in her vote to pay for family allowances (9.8.66 BN 72/119 PRO) and then finally argued unconvincingly for budget secrecy and more convincingly of the problems of gender redistribution and concentrating help on the poorest (7.11.66 BN 72/119, PRO). Inland Revenue tried to make the political objection that tax allowances were not a subsidy but about the capacity to pay. However as Lewin remarked, this was just a matter of semantics not fact (July 1966, PIN 17/155 PRO). It was also of course a matter of accounting.

a Cabinet discussion to be postponed (9.2.67, PREM 13/1834, PRO), insisting on consultation with the CBI and TUC (20.12.66, CAB 128/41, PRO) and successfully postponing the final decision until after PESC in July 1967. Another was persuading his Cabinet colleagues to support him or face cuts in their departments spending. At the crucial March 1967 Cabinet meeting, Callaghan threatened that the extra money or family allowances could only be found by “reductions in other programmes” (14.3.67, CAB 129/42, PRO). However, he had been putting “tremendous pressure” on spending Cabinet ministers even before the February 1967 meeting to support him or risk cuts to their budgets (Crossman 1976 p.252). His last resort was to appeal for his budget’s secrecy and argue that the decision could not be made in Cabinet (23.2.67 CAB 128/41, PRO).

Herbison, handicapped by her lack of a permanent Cabinet seat, had to fight to maintain her majority support throughout the struggle. CPAG became a useful ally to her. She used CPAG’s figure of half a million children in poverty in her memorandum to the Prime Minister (1.1.66, PREM 13/1834, PRO). She was able to cite the threat of CPAG action in a letter to Callaghan, warning him that they were “vulnerable to attack unless something [was] done very soon... “ (8.2.66, PREM 13/1834, PRO). Her Cabinet paper for the discussion on November 17 1966 reminded her colleagues that they would be attacked by CPAG and back-benchers if they did nothing about poverty especially when the *Circumstances of Families* report, that she had commissioned to investigate the extent of family poverty, was published (c(66)157, CAB 129/127, PRO). Her briefing notes for the Cabinet meeting of March 14 1967 and June 6 1967 recommended that she mention the promise to CPAG (13.3.67 BN 72/119 and PIN 17/155 PRO). In fighting for an interim increase on June 6 1967, she argued that they had assured CPAG that they were treating the problem as urgent but had done nothing (c(67)93, CAB 128/130, PRO).

In August 1966, Lynes had been employed by CPAG to co-ordinate its campaign. He had intelligence on what was happening within Whitehall from his contacts in the civil service (Lynes interview). Therefore CPAG was able to organise a campaign in the press in support of the Minister. Just before the crucial Cabinet debate of December 20 1966, the main papers carried stories about child poverty.

all speaking to a CPAG spokesperson (17.12.66-19.12.66, BN 72/119, PRO). A teach-in of the issues was held in December 1966 and received press coverage (*The Times* 18.12.66). In January 1967, Peter Townsend was the main expert on a Panorama programme about family poverty (16.1.67, PIN 17/155, PRO). Stories appeared in the press (see chapter 8.2). Abel-Smith also made her aware of the preliminary findings of Land's study of large families which showed that 22% of the sample of London families with over five children had less income than the NA scale (Land 1969 p.17). Banting says "CPAG essentially took on the role of public voice for the Minister" (Banting 1979 p.100).

However, CPAG's role should not be overstated, because there was a negative side to CPAG's campaign. CPAG's scheme was confused in the press with leaks of Herbison's scheme. Certainly, this was the intent of the Cabinet leak. Therefore Herbison felt obliged to write to Harold Wilson, arguing that "give and take" was the best answer and that the criticisms of the CPAG scheme should not reflect on her's (9.2.67, PIN 17/155, PRO). Banting argues that CPAG's memorandum to the Chancellor of February 1967 had shifted to support the Minister's position. Yet, the memorandum still advocated the complete abolition of child tax allowances and a much higher family allowance (CPAG 1967 p.ii-iii). The Treasury was easily able to dismiss it as being too expensive, making two million families slightly worse off and bringing one million more people into the tax net. The memorandum was shown to the Chancellor but not because the Treasury considered it to be a realistic policy. Instead it was "...a further warning that the partial 'give and take' scheme that is before the Cabinet would be regarded by the group and others aiming at redistribution of incomes as only a first step" (21.2.67, T227/2419, PRO). CPAG's memorandum was therefore used by the Treasury as a scare tactic of the possible result of acceding to a policy of "give and take".

The Labour Cabinet was always interested in TUC's views. The TUC's General Council (GC) asked to meet Herbison in February 1966, because they were concerned about the possibility of a means tested solution for child poverty (16.2.67 and 22.2.67, BN 72/119, PRO). Its point blank refusal of a means test was a "stroke of luck" to the supporters of "give and take" (Crossman 1976 vol.2 p.252). The resistance of the TUC was also used by Herbison in her Cabinet paper

for March 14 1967 (c(67)24, CAB 129/128). Although, the TUC were not at their strongest when arguing for Social Security benefits increases, the fact that they supported Herbison was useful. The opposition of the CBI (14.12.66 T227/2417, PRO) was easily dismissed, as their alternative was an extension of SB to the working. The Cabinet knew this was unacceptable to the TUC (2.1.67 T227/2417, PRO).

The TUC's views and support were important because of the government's need for their prices and incomes policy to be successful during this period. This was always lurking in the background of the Labour government. Therefore Herbison was advised to draw the Cabinet's attention to the benefit of giving help to low income earners to reduce the legitimacy of wage demands (1.11.66, BN 72/119, PRO). Balogh, also, raised it as an issue with the Prime Minister (25.11.66, PREM 13/1834, PRO). However it was in the struggle for the second rise in family allowances after devaluation that the incomes policy argument came to the fore, with the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) pushing for higher family allowances. Whereas Hart, the Minister of Social Security, and Stewart, the First Secretary of State¹³⁸, were asking for an increase in family allowances of three shillings to fulfil the devaluation pledge (5.1.68, CAB 128/43 and c(68)51, CAB 128/136, PRO), the DEA was asking for five shillings. It believed that it would legitimise the strict incomes policy and prevent the need for wage increases, which would cost much more (c(68)50, CAB 129/136, PRO, 15.2.68 PREM 13/2396, PRO). This had all been agreed in MSSC (27.2.68, CAB 134/3282, PRO). Therefore by the time the Cabinet met in full the Chancellor had shifted to accept three shillings with "give and take." Jenkins told CPAG on February 21 1968 that the only acceptable form of means test was the income tax test (EC minutes 21.2.68 box 65, PTA). This was a distinct move from his earlier positions of nothing or a means tested amount (c(68)5 CAB 129/133 and 8.1.68 T227/2613, PRO).

There were three important people in the government with regard to family allowances. Firstly, Herbison was crucial and what she lacked in political clout, she compensated for in commitment. It was mostly due to her inability to get a

¹³⁸ The Overlord of the Social Services from August 29 1967

ten-shilling family allowance with claw-back that she resigned in July 1967, despite her success in obtaining “give and take”.¹³⁹ She had threatened to resign before over Callaghan’s delaying measures against family endowment (Crossman 1976 p.216). Secondly, Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, was pivotal. He was not a supporter of a large rise in family allowances and in the beginning had favoured only a small rise linked to prices (7.1.66, PREM 13/1834, PRO), but he refused to be lobbied by Callaghan (Crossman 17.2.67 original diaries MSS 154/8/165, RCP) and stayed neutral throughout the debates. His Cabinet reshuffles (based on far more than just family endowment) cancelled themselves out. The replacement of Gordon Walker for Houghton in January 1967 made the situation more difficult for the supporters of family endowment. However the replacement of Callaghan with the more sympathetic Roy Jenkins,¹⁴⁰ as Chancellor of the Exchequer made the second rise probably easier than it would have been.

A crucial figure in assuring the Prime Minister’s neutrality and aiding the pro-claw-back cause was Thomas Balogh, the Prime Minister’s trusted advisor and friend (Crossman 1976 p.295, 717). In his summaries to Wilson, Balogh repeatedly destroyed Callaghan’s arguments for a means tested benefit and promoted “give and take.” Calling family endowment “one of the most important social issues that the Cabinet has had and is likely to have to decide upon ... ,” he urged the Prime Minister to ensure it was heard by a full Cabinet and did not just slip through the back door of budgetary procedure (9.11.66 PREM 13/1834, PRO). As early as late 1966, he was linking family endowment not only to Labour’s non-means testing ideology but also to the incomes policy ((9.11.66 PREM 13/1834) 25.11.66 PREM 13/1834, PRO). Not long before the February 1967 debate on family endowment, Balogh was to reinforce these points to Wilson. Just before the decisive March 1967 Cabinet meeting, Balogh told the Prime Minister that Callaghan’s figures for the cost contradicted the government’s own accounting scheme (2.3.67 PREM 13/2396, PRO).¹⁴¹ When Callaghan made an attempt to use a housing scheme to replace higher family allowances, Balogh

¹³⁹ There was also another struggle with the Chancellor over pensions.

¹⁴⁰ Although he at first only offered a means tested family allowance as compensation for devaluation (10.1.68, CAB 152/105). He did however agree with the Social Services group that he must budget differently for family endowment (20.6.68, Crossman diaries original)

¹⁴¹ The White Paper Cmnd 2915 had argued that the lines between tax allowances and government expenditure would not be so concrete.

criticised the lack of consultation and dismissed it as unworkable (12.7.67 PREM 12/2396, PRO).

Balogh also worked closely with Crossman, the main advocate of the “give and take” approach in the Cabinet. They attacked Callaghan’s misleading costs for “give and take” together in a paper, which Crossman gave to the Cabinet at the decisive March 1967 Cabinet meeting (Crossman 1976 p.173).¹⁴² When Wilson asked Balogh to assist Houghton and Callaghan on a joint paper on family endowment for the December 1966 meeting on the subject, Balogh had kept Crossman well informed on the negotiations (Crossman 1976 p.173).

A final note about the “give and take” debate was that “give and take” was never actually implemented, instead the mechanism of claw-back, developed by Kaldor was used. In practical terms there was very little difference between the two mechanisms (see chapter 1.4.1.5). However claw-back answered the Inland Revenue’s (IR) objections to the anomalies caused because of the different age and residency qualifications for child tax allowances and family allowances (Miller to Rampton January 1967 T227/2417, PRO). Kaldor believed that claw-back was a solution to the problem of family poverty, although pressure from the Treasury for other schemes led to a toying with the idea of paying family allowances only to families below the tax threshold (16.1.67, T227/2418, PRO). This scheme led nowhere after the MSS pointed out that tax is based on the previous year’s earnings and this would lead to the scheme being difficult at the margins (Abbot to Rampton Nov. 1967 T227/2613, PRO). However Kaldor believed that a scheme that made only the increase selective was myopic considering the economic crisis. He argued strongly for family allowances to be made fully selective, i.e. claw-back on the whole allowance. To compensate he argued for a rise in child tax allowances and a Minimum Earned Income Allowance (MEIA)¹⁴³, which would raise the tax threshold (Kaldor to Diamond¹⁴⁴ Jan 1968 T227/2613, PRO). Yet, despite Kaldor’s innovativeness, it would be wrong to credit him with persuading the Chancellor of the benefits of claw-back.

¹⁴² The paper was submitted by Crossman as c27(67) and dated 13th March 1967 (CAB 129/128, PRO).

¹⁴³ Also a favourite of the TUC. The idea was for there to be a minimum allowance for all workers before the payment of tax.

¹⁴⁴ Chief secretary at the Treasury i.e. the Junior Minister but always present at Cabinet meetings although not a member of the Cabinet officially

The Chancellor had had claw-back forced on him by the Cabinet.

The high profile launch of *The Poor and the Poorest*, igniting the media's interest in child poverty, was the main catalyst for forcing family allowances into a priority position in Whitehall. The fear of CPAG's reaction in the serious press was important for Herbison in justifying the initial rise in family allowances. Yet it was the determination of Herbison to get help for poor families that meant a clawed-back family allowance succeeded. One of the main political reasons for a higher family allowance was the imminent publication of *Circumstances of Families*, which had been instigated by Herbison. The support of the TUC was also important, as was the quiet persuasion of Balogh. Although on balance CPAG was helpful to Herbison, the negative effects of their radical scheme being confused with her's were also important. In the campaign for the second increase in family allowances, CPAG played a much smaller direct role. Certainly, the reaction of back-benchers and the ability of CPAG to condemn the government for having done nothing to help the poorest were also implicit in Hart's arguments for the second rise. However it was not Hart but Shore that secured that increase in family allowances. The DEA's arguments for higher family allowances on prices and incomes grounds delivered to Hart what she had wanted; an extra three shillings subject to claw-back.

6.2.2 March 1968 to February 1969: the Public and Private Battlegrounds

CPAG called the 1967-8 increase in family allowances derisory (CPAG 1968 p.1). They continued to submit memoranda to government. Yet in the aftermath of the up-rating it was CPAG's growing interest in welfare rights issues that dominated the formal relationship between CPAG and Whitehall. A report on optical and dental charges exemptions was sent to Michael Stewart, the Social Services Overlord, in December 1967. It was taken seriously and MSS and SBC were asked to comment (9.1.68 BN 72/122, Jan 68 AST 31/27 PRO). Although the SBC in their response were sceptical of some of CPAG's claims, they did agree that the SBC should do more with the MSS to ensure people knew of their rights although they contended that most of the reports recommendations were already the subject of SBC scrutiny. It was not the accuracy of the report, which attracted

the government's attention.¹⁴⁵ It was the fact that the report was released to the press on January 8 1968 and Tony Lynes was able to discuss the issues on as prestigious a radio news programme as *The World at One*. CPAG's skilful use of the media meant that officials and ministers were at least starting to have to take notice of what CPAG was saying (Wendt interview). For example the memorandum prompted Stewart to take notice and he, in turn, requested that SBC should justify their policies to him.

As Labour tackled the thorny issue of prescription charges, CPAG were then invited to meet with Hart. Although other groups were present at the meeting the Ministry referred to it as a meeting with CPAG (14.1.68 BN 72/4 PRO).¹⁴⁶ It was a reflection of CPAG's growing profile within the Ministry that it was granted an audience with the Minister, after correspondence with the Minister of Health (Feb. 1968 HWP). Again CPAG's ability to activate the media and feed back-bench Labour MPs with information were important factors. Yet, CPAG was only able to offer its views on details of exemptions, not the main issue of the correctness of charges.

Lynes' correspondence went straight to the Minister, with whom he was on first name terms and knew from SPSC.¹⁴⁷ Hart was happy to be interviewed by Lynes for *Poverty* (9.3.68, BN72/2, PRO). When Hart's ambitious household leaflet campaign for low income families was curtailed by the Treasury and the Home Publicity Committee (HPC) (23.4.68 and 27.6.68 BN 72/2), CPAG was disappointed. It is highly likely that Lynes knew what was happening and wanted to salvage *with* Hart as much of the entitlement campaign as possible. Hart certainly saw Lynes as an ally and even considered asking him to respond to a *Spectator* article on her behalf, although she later dropped this idea (16.9.68, BN 72/8, PRO). Although CPAG was unable to reverse the government's decision to curtail the entitlement campaign and run it simultaneously with the anti-work-shy campaign, Lynes did achieve a few small gains. Hart wrote to Lynes agreeing that prescription charge exemptions had not been given enough publicity and issued a press release (14.6.68 BN 72/4 PRO). Similarly, against her officials' advice Hart

¹⁴⁵ The dental information had not even been collected first hand by CPAG (Jan 68 AST 31/27 PRO).

¹⁴⁶ DIG, Patients Association, Association for Improvement in maternity Services, Institute of Medical Social Workers and Association of Family Case Workers

¹⁴⁷ They had served on it together in May 1965 (SPSC records, LPA).

sent Lynes copies of the entitlement leaflet for CPAG to distribute (14.8.68 BN 72/2 PRO).

Although CPAG had some leverage with the MSS, the same was not true outside the MSS. When the Home Policy Committee (HPC) agreed to limit Hart's entitlement campaign it felt able to do so because "no outside interest [had] been aroused so far" (27.6.68 BN 72/2 PRO). Yet by this time CPAG had already interviewed Hart about the campaign (20.4.68 BN 72/2 PRO). The only explanation is that although the MSS were becoming aware of CPAG, Cabinet ministers on the HPC were not.

However, family endowment remained an issue within Whitehall. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, a desire by the Chancellor and the Treasury to find a better solution to family endowment than claw-back. Secondly, there was a concern about abuse of Social Security by families who found it paid not to work. Even before the second rise in family allowances the Treasury had been busy seeking alternatives to claw-back. The main reason for this was to save money and to maintain tax allowances, which the Chancellor argued were more popular than cash benefits (20.12.67 T227/2613, PRO). The first idea was an option scheme of either family allowances or child tax allowances developed by Kaldor. However the anomalies at the margins made the idea too difficult. (15.12.67 T227/2613, PRO). Meanwhile a Housing Allowance based on family size was being resurrected both within and outside the Treasury. This was despite the fact that it would take a year to get ready, would add to the means test jungle of housing benefits and would do nothing for middle income families (9.2.68 CAB 152/105, 23.2.68 T227/2614, PRO).

After an unsuccessful bid to persuade MSSC to sanction the replacement of family allowances with housing allowances (Crossman 1977 p.104), the Chancellor, anxious to fulfil his pledge to Parliament to make family allowances fully selective, set up a Treasury group under Sir David Serpill. This group was originally intended to save money by either limiting family allowances to families below a certain income level or with full claw-back.¹⁴⁸ Yet its main recommendation was a child tax credit scheme devised by Kaldor (7.10.68

¹⁴⁸ This would involve an option scheme or a replacement for family allowances.

T227/2617, PRO). This scheme not only cost £70 million but was attacked by IR on a range of grounds: it was no different to CPAG's scheme, an attack on graduated taxation, incentives, the wife's source of income or a reduction in take home pay, as well as a burden on employers and IR (5.7.68, T227/2618, PRO).¹⁴⁹

The search within DHSS and Cabinet Committees was no more fruitful. Reports on a national minimum wage and negative income tax showed that both would be expensive and ineffective in solving the problem of poverty (5.11.68 CAB 152/3282 and CAB 152/3288, PRO). Crossman told an irritated Jenkins, claw-back might have been the best solution all along (16.12.68 BN 72/148). Jenkins' answer was to set up an inter-departmental group to study family endowment.¹⁵⁰ The fact that Jenkins refused to allow Kaldor to join the group suggests that he and the Treasury did not want any more elaborate solutions. However, Brian Abel-Smith was allowed to join.

Abel-Smith was responsible for the working group's long term policy ideas. His first idea was of a twenty-eight shilling family allowances with claw-back and the abolition of child dependency allowances for second and subsequent children in National Insurance and Supplementary Benefits. This would widen the gap between families in work and out of work (24.12.68 MSS 154/3/ DH/43/267, RCA). Despite some reservations about the tax threshold (20.12.68 BN 89/148 PRO), the idea was adopted by a key family policy civil servant, John Stacpoole.¹⁵¹ It became the basis for Ennals' memorandum to the first meeting of the working group (12.2.69 CAB 152/87, PRO). A second paper by Abel Smith discussed a number of long term schemes for family endowment, which he labelled as P, Q, X and Y. All the schemes assumed a reduction or abolition of child tax allowances and the abolition of CDA at least for later children. Whereas schemes Q and Y worked on a family allowance of twenty shillings to twenty-two shillings, P and X advocated family allowances of thirty-one shillings (MSS 154/3/DH/43/131). This was only four shillings short of CPAG's 1969-70 proposals (CPAG and NFOAPA 1970). Some variants of P even factored in a

¹⁴⁹ Although Serpill's group accepted the social work adviser's (Olive Stevenson) arguments for the child tax credit to be paid to the mother on social grounds (and political with the rising strength of the women's movement) (7.10.68 T227/2617, PRO), Kaldor continued to argue that the payment must be made to the father on incomes policy grounds (21.11.68 T227/2617).

¹⁵⁰ As Serpill had recommended in July 1968 (26.7.68 T227/2617, PRO)

¹⁵¹ The Assistant Secretary responsible for family policy in National Insurance Division A

family allowance for first children. Abel-Smith, himself, conceded that a scheme between PX and QY was the most realistic (MSS 154/3/DH/43/131, RCP).

The short term proposals put to the working group by Stacpoole in Ennals' memorandum advocated raising family allowances by three shillings with claw-back, instead of the planned three shillings increase in child dependency allowance (CDA)¹⁵² (12.2.69 CAB 152/87, PRO). This idea was further elaborated upon by Abel-Smith (MSS 154/3/DH/43/131, RCP). Accepted by the working group and the Chancellor, subject to 1970/1 expenditure plans, Ennals, reluctantly, agreed to leave the plans with the Treasury (April 1969 CAB 152/87, PRO). The plans were indefinitely shelved and the working group disbanded. The long-term plans were never even fully discussed by the working group. They were attacked by both the IR and Treasury, which disliked bringing more people into the tax net and the upheaval of the tax system (March 1969 and 17.4.69 CAB 152/87, PRO). Abel-Smith's arguments that higher family allowances compensated families who paid their tax indirectly and that freezing of child tax allowances since 1963 had brought half a million each year into tax (3.4.69 MSS 154/3/DH/43/54, RCP) did not convince the Treasury.

This case study illustrates how far a radical idea could get within Whitehall. The original idea for a much higher family allowance became acceptable to Stacpoole. Although Stacpoole was not at first convinced that the main advantage of widening the gap between those in and out of work was sufficient (20.12.68 BN 89/148 PRO), it stimulated the ministers' political considerations about incentives to work and made the idea more acceptable. However Stacpoole was never convinced by Abel-Smith's urgency (27.12.68 BN 89/148 PRO). This was reflected by the working group, which wanted a moderate proposal that was likely to be acceptable to a Cabinet in a pre-election period. Hence there was a concentration on the short-term proposals by the working group. In the end, despite his reservations, Ennals had little choice but to hand the initiative to the Treasury. The Chancellor controlled the budget and taxation policy. His support would be needed.

The explanation for the different priorities of the Treasury and the DHSS can in

¹⁵² Although CDA for first children would still have to increase three shillings.

part be explained by CPAG and the anti-scrounger mood. Although the extra cost was low, the Treasury must have been repelled by the thought of bringing one hundred and fifty thousand more people into the tax net and knew that the scope for further claw-back was narrow (17.4.69 CAB 152/87 PRO). There were the political considerations of reducing take home pay of Labour supporters close to an election and adding to the expenditure side of the public accounts whilst Britain was still dependent on foreign financiers. Although the DHSS was sensitive to the problems of take home pay, it was also sensitive on one hand to the attacks from CPAG that it was not doing enough for the poor and on the other hand that it promoted scrounging (Crossman 1976 p.140). The short term and long term plans offered a solution to both of these problems by widening the gap between those in and out of work but at the same time helping the poorest working families. Crossman was bitter about the failure of the Treasury to adopt the policy arguing that, “the greatest danger is if nothing is done the government will appear to be insensitive to the needs of families who depend on a low wage earner” (May 1969 CAB 152/87, PRO).

Much of Abel Smith’s advice to Crossman was in line with CPAG thinking. This was particularly true of his strong criticism of a civil service suggested means-tested scheme, which proposed giving a means tested allowance to working families based on the number of children (9.5.69 MSS 154/3/DH/44/179 RCP). In addition, like CPAG after 1966, he was sceptical about negative income tax (9.5.69 MSS 154/3/DH/44/179 RCP).¹⁵³ However Abel-Smith was not consciously promoting CPAG ideas but his own (and those of the Labour Party), which CPAG mostly shared. It is Stacpoole’s view that Abel-Smith suggested the liberal Finer as chair for the Finer Committee on One Parent Families, which Crossman set up to investigate the problems of one parent families (Stacpoole interview).¹⁵⁴ However, Abel-Smith was conscious of the tight financial framework in which the government worked. Therefore some of his advice such as abolishing subsidies for school meals and using the savings for family

¹⁵³ CPAG made clear its scepticism of negative income tax in a policy paper of 1969 (Box 65, Townsend Archive).

¹⁵⁴ The Finer Committee which was established in November 1969 and reported in October 1974. Its remit was to investigate the situation of one parent families and make recommendations as to the best way of supporting them.

endowment (MSS 154/3/DH/43/322)¹⁵⁵ or not going ahead with a leaflet entitlement campaign because it would be counterproductive (MSS 154 3/DH 43/174, RCP) was in opposition to his former colleagues. Abel-Smith had some influence on the poverty debate within the DHSS but his ideas did not have any wider influence. In addition, Abel-Smith was no CPAG spy or agitator and his first loyalty was to the government (Wendt interview).

6.3 CPAG under Field

In February 1969, Lynes was replaced by Field. Lynes had developed good media contacts and established a reputation in Whitehall as a group “whose views were at a minimum worth knowing and at a maximum probably needed some kind of response” (Wendt interview). Not surprisingly with a change in secretary/director, a change of chair, the continuing growth of branches and preparations for the opening of the Legal Department, the new director concentrated far less on Whitehall. However by late 1969, the new chair and director were settled in and ready to tackle the government.

6.3.1 “The Poor Get Poorer Under Labour” Campaign¹⁵⁶

Despite all the debate within Whitehall, there was no further action by the government to improve family endowment. The attention of the government and the press turned to the new super-annuated pension scheme. An election was highly likely in 1970. Therefore Field and Townsend calculated that in order to push poverty back onto the government’s agenda, CPAG would have to force the issue back into the media spotlight. Armed with a politically explosive if factually weak memorandum Field and Townsend met Crossman on January 27 1970.¹⁵⁷ During the acrimonious meeting Townsend and Field repeated the main claim of the memorandum that “low income families [had] not been given priority in policy and in some respects they [had] even lost ground” (Field and Townsend 1970 p.10). Crossman’s response was that nobody would believe them (Crossman Diaries 1977 vol. 3 p.791 and Field 1982 p.33).

CPAG and its high profile supporters had sniped at the government before:

¹⁵⁵ CPAG was in favour of free school meals for all children

¹⁵⁶ The title of this section is taken from a press release issued by CPAG on May 22 1970

Townsend's, Abel Smith's and Titmuss' attack in the Fabian lectures of 1966; an attack by Townsend at the 1968 CPAG conference; general and specific attacks in *Poverty* since the first issue (Lynes 1966 p.5 1967a p.1-2, 1967b p.4-5, 1968a p.1-2, 1968c p.1-2) and an exchange of letters with Harold Wilson about the government's narrow policies (Lynes 1967c p.10-13). Yet the attack in 1970 was remarkable because of its ferocity and longevity. Coupled with similar accusations by Tony Atkinson, Crossman was worried about the effect on the Labour Party (original Crossman Diaries MSS.154/8/165, RCP).

The media eagerly seized on CPAG's arguments. *Tribune* summarised CPAG's case on 6 February 1970, and over the next month it published a series of letters from Ennals and the CPAG (Field and Townsend 1970 p.22-31). Both Ennals and CPAG embroiled themselves in a parallel debate in *The New Statesman* sparked by Atkinson's book, *The Reform of Social Security* (*The New Statesman* 23.1.70 p.1-2, 30.1.70 and 6.2.70). The debate was by no means confined to the Labour Party press, although that is where the battles were particularly acrimonious. Early on there had been an exchange of letters between Townsend, Field and sixteen sympathetic professors in *The Times* and Houghton and six Labour MPs. (*The Times* 2.3.70 and 5.3.70).¹⁵⁸ The press latched on to the story generally. Crossman and Ennals also appeared on television and radio programmes opposite Townsend to debate whether the poor had got relatively poorer (Crossman Diaries 1977 vol. 3 p.791 and 892).

In April 1970 the memorandum, complete with a summary of the public battle, was published under the more provocative name of *Poverty and the Labour Government*. It was followed by a poverty manifesto which again argued that an examination of the Labour government's record proved "the dimensions of poverty [had] not diminished and some groups [had] not kept pace" (CPAG 1970a p.7). In May, a debate at the Cambridge Union saw Ennals, Crossman and Nevitt¹⁵⁹ opposed by Des Wilson and Townsend. Townsend argued that some groups "may" have become worse off under Labour (Townsend debate paper 1970 box 70 p.5 PTA), a claim refuted by Crossman and Ennals (Ennals and Crossman

¹⁵⁷ see Field 1982 p.34, and Kelly (forthcoming). Field described the memorandum as strong on spin.

¹⁵⁸ A reply by Field and Townsend was not published.

¹⁵⁹ Della Nevitt was an advisor to the Treasury and Brian Abel-Smith's colleague at LSE

debate papers 1970 box 70 p.5 PTA).

Although *Poverty and the Labour Government*, by Field's own admissions, did not contain the evidence to support the conclusion that the poor were worse off under Labour (Field 1982 p.34), it was impossible for the Labour government to prove conclusively otherwise (Bull in Kelly forthcoming).¹⁶⁰ Labour appeared guilty because it could not prove itself innocent. If Crossman was concerned, Ennals was worried. It is Wendt's view that "for the few months leading up to the election of June 1970, dealing with CPAG was a very significant if the not biggest part of [Ennal's] job" (Wendt interview). The Ministry was concerned enough to arrange a special meeting of Crossman, Ennals, Abel-Smith and Odgers to discuss CPAG (25.3.65). Ennals was worried about the paper he was to give to the CPAG's AGM (Crossman 16.4.70, original MSS 154/3/165, RCP). Although Ennals refuted all of CPAG's claims, his tone at the AGM was conciliatory. He pleaded with CPAG to attack the common enemy of the Conservative Party rather than "waste energy and ... credibility arguing with each other in public" (Ennal's paper April 18 1970, box 72 p.25, PTA).

Ennal's plea that they should stop arguing with each other and Crossman's remark that it looked bad when their friends were attacking them (Crossman 1977 p.791) are crucial to understanding why the campaign turned so acrimonious. CPAG's closeness to the Labour through its overlapping membership had meant that both Labour ministers and members of CPAG¹⁶¹ had taken it for granted that CPAG was essentially sympathetic to Labour. It is Wendt's view that the fact that they were all from the Left made the relationship difficult. From Labour's point of view, this was their own left-wing attacking them (Wendt interview). It is clear that the campaign was hurting the Labour government and in particular Ennals. Why did CPAG attack the Labour government so mercilessly?

Firstly, CPAG probably did not know about the Serpill group's or the later working party's interest in the problem of family poverty. Even if they had, it would have made little difference. The government had not publicly acted on the problem since April 1968. As the superannuated pensions scheme, the new

¹⁶⁰ This view is attributed to Professor Hilary Land and appeared first in Bull, D (1972) *Family Poverty*. Duckworth, London

¹⁶¹ See chapter 4. 4 for details

attendance allowances and pre-election activities caught the attention of ministers. CPAG felt they had to get family poverty back firmly on the agenda. One of the main weapons of a pressure group is its ability to embarrass or at least threaten to embarrass ministers, who then compel civil servants to look at the problem and seek solutions (Lynes in Kelly forthcoming). To the degree that it was hurting Crossman and Ennals (Wendt interview and Kelly forthcoming), it was extremely successful (Lynes in Kelly forthcoming).

Secondly, the leadership of CPAG had changed. Lynes had his contacts in the civil service through which he worked. His style was well-reasoned argument to convince the Minister. The chair, Fred Philp, disliked confrontation. Field was less attached to the Labour Party hierarchy. His view was that he was paid to work for the CPAG in order to improve conditions for the poor and therefore, whatever his personal feelings, he owed no loyalty to the Labour Party (Field interview). Townsend had been at a personal level dismayed at the Labour government's treatment of the poor and disadvantaged since 1966 (Townsend interview). He had few misgivings about attacking the Labour government. Despite objections from Manchester branch and the resignation of Sir John Walley, the EC did not try to stop the attack. Indeed there was no sense of opposition from the core members of the EC¹⁶² (Kelly forthcoming). Crossman was also responsible for the bitterness of the campaign. He took an aggressive defensive stance and the argument between him and Townsend continued after the election, while Crossman was the editor of the *New Statesman* (*The Times* 8.9.70).

Thirdly, the election was widely predicted for September. The announcement in May of a June election came as a surprise. It made sense to CPAG to distance itself from the Labour Party and make it clear that it was a non-partisan pressure group that was willing to fight the government whatever the party in the interests of its client group. The plan had been to publish a critique of the Conservative plans before the election in autumn. It was the surprise of the early election that made this impossible (Bull₂ interview). However, it was still justifiable for CPAG to attack the party in office (Field in Kelly forthcoming). This distancing from the Labour Party was tactically astute. If Labour had won, then they would have been

¹⁶² See Bull's, Veit Wilson's and Bradshaw's contributions

aware of the power of CPAG to embarrass them and seen the problem of poor families as an important political issue. Political parties do not prioritise groups whose support can be taken for granted (Grant 1995 p.83). When the Conservatives did win, they took CPAG, as a non-partisan group, seriously (Field interview). They also recognised the problem of family poverty and one of their first actions was to introduce and pass FIS to ease the burden on low income families.

However, the campaign did damage relations with the Labour government (Bradshaw in Kelly forthcoming) and destroyed any good will between ministers and CPAG members (such as Townsend) with whom they had had close working and social relationships. Yet, certainly where Crossman was concerned, personal relationships had little bearing on his treatment of CPAG (Wendt interview). Interestingly, Sir John Walley, a former civil servant who had recently joined CPAG believed that the group's attack on the Labour government amounted to CPAG aligning itself with that party in giving the impression that it was the party on which CPAG pinned its hopes (Beltram in Kelly forthcoming).¹⁶³

Internally for CPAG, the campaign made it clear that whatever members' personal attachments to the Labour Party, CPAG was distinct. It also was Field's and Townsend's opportunity to prove themselves decisive leaders, who used different methods from their predecessors. Field could take the opportunity to prove himself an effective and tough campaigner. However one casualty was the loss of Sir John Walley. Walley, who as a respected former civil servant was useful to CPAG not only because of his public profile, but also because he knew his way around the DHSS and had contacts. A former civil servant was (and still is) an attractive prize for any pressure group (Hennessey 1989 p.501). Losing Walley was a high price to pay.

In the Ministry of Social Security, there was concern about the embarrassment to ministers. Stacpoole's family allowance department pressured the Treasury to allow an increase in family allowances with the claw-back mechanism. The problem was not that the Treasury was just being difficult, it was that the tax threshold for families had been allowed to sink so far that consequently there was

¹⁶³ Also see Walley to Field 5.2.70, File 4, Box 65, Townsend Archive.

no scope for a further reduction to help fund an increase in family allowances (Stacpoole in Kelly forthcoming). This is illustrated in appendix G.2. Although CPAG's attention had been drawn to the low tax threshold by Abel-Smith at the January meeting with Crossman, it was assumed by Field that what the government needed to do was to raise not only the family allowance but also the tax threshold (Field in Kelly forthcoming). However, as Sir Douglas Wass¹⁶⁴ explained to Stacpoole, it was not possible to raise child tax allowances (and therefore the tax threshold for families) and reduce them at the same time. As a simple increase in family allowances was prohibitively expensive and could easily be attacked by the Conservatives as wasteful, the DHSS was left with no feasible options. At the same time the pressure was mounting as Macleod made a pledge to CPAG that a Conservative government would raise family allowances using the claw-back mechanism (Field 1982 p.37-8) As a result, the whole issue of family allowances became a serious election issue (Stacpoole in Kelly forthcoming).¹⁶⁵

The campaign did not bring down the government, although CPAG was made a convenient scapegoat of the Labour Party.¹⁶⁶ It did act as a catalyst for bringing the problem of family poverty onto the election agenda. The memorandum, itself, was, through a clever use of spin, debated and reported in the media. This in itself was an achievement as CPAG's claw-back proposals were complicated and were in Field's words "... a move which did not necessarily get people shouting on the street" (Field in Kelly forthcoming). However the real strengths of the campaign were that it attacked the Labour government on a vulnerable point. The suggestion that Labour had allowed the poor to become poorer would have a negative effect on party morale. However two factors from outside CPAG's control made the campaign more effective. Firstly, Wilson encouraged by the improved economic situation and the opinion polls called an earlier than expected election. Therefore the campaign became entangled in the election campaign. Secondly, Macleod's unexpected pledge made the issue an important election issue.

¹⁶⁴ A senior official in the Treasury

¹⁶⁵ It was included on the Conservative Party's list of eight key issues to be constantly brought to the attention of the electorate (CRD 3/9/83, CPA).

¹⁶⁶ Field and Bull both talk about being blamed for Labour's 1970 election defeat for many years afterwards (Bull and Field in Kelly forthcoming).

6.3.2 June 1970 to February 1974: Working With the Conservatives

After the Conservative victory, CPAG were quick to present the new Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, a memorandum detailing their policies. Central to this was the policy of abolishing of child tax allowances and introducing a thirty-five shilling family allowance (Field and Townsend 1970 p.3). Encouraged by Macleod's and Heath's pre-election pledges to claw-back (Field 1970b p.1, Field 1982 p.38-9), CPAG was complimentary to the Conservatives. It traced their previous commitment to family allowances (CPAG 1970b p.1) and attempted to flatter them by arguing that the public would trust the Conservatives more about claw-back (CPAG 1970b p.7). However the Conservatives never continued claw-back. Instead they introduced on October 28 1970 a bill for the means tested solution of Family Income Supplement (FIS).

The main characteristics of FIS were that it was available to people working more than twenty-four hours a week. Half the difference between the family's wage and approximately the SB level was made up (up to a maximum of £5 at first). The benefit was based on six months earnings and was valid for six months and then later a year. Single parents could claim on the same terms as couples and get the same benefits (Kiernan *et al.* 1998 p.172) The benefit was not administered by the local SBC office but by the central SBC. This was important as it protected, at least psychologically, low paid workers from the stigma of being claimants. Instead of having to apply in person at an office, an anonymous bureaucrat many miles away checked eligibility. Another advantage of FIS was that it acted as a passport for other nationally determined benefits such as free school meals and later rent rebates exempting the family from having to apply separately.

Despite the fact that a means tested solution was not what CPAG had wanted, the group should get some credit for the speed at which the Conservatives helped poor families. Indeed, the Conservatives had formulated few plans for abolishing family poverty before 1970. At the Selsdon meeting¹⁶⁷, Macleod had wanted to abolish family allowances as part of his package of tax and public expenditure cuts. The Shadow Cabinet's discussion of the problem led to serious doubts that this was possible as some help would have to be given to the poorest (CRD

¹⁶⁷ The Shadow Cabinet met at Selsdon Park Hotel from 31.1.70-1.2.70 to discuss policy.

3/9/93, CPA). All agreed that some form of negative income tax was the correct way forward. However, it was not an immediate possibility (CRD 3/9 93, CPA). A means tested solution was equally as difficult because of stigma, as Margaret Thatcher¹⁶⁸ pointed out (CRD 3/9/93 p.2, CPA). There was a risk of both alienating the target, middle-band earner voter (CRD 3/9/93 p.8, CPA) and the exploitation of anti-means test sentiment by Labour (CRD 3/9/93 p.6, CPA). Joseph argued in vain (from CPAG figures) that the poorest needed thirty-five shillings per week per child and that this would cost seventy five millions *per annum* (CRD 3/9/93 p.3, CPA). In the end the only agreement was that there should be further consideration of the problem and Lord Jellicoe suggested twelve months for a group to look at the problem (CRD 3/9/93 p.10, CPA). Heath concluded that they did “not seem prepared to do what was required” (CRD 3/9/93p.9, CPA).

Yet by May, the Conservative Party had seemingly changed its stance. Macleod pledged the use of claw-back as a short term solution to family poverty until a negative income tax could be introduced (Field 1982 p.38). This was confirmed by Heath (Heath to Field 19.3.70, Box 69, PTA). Certainly it would be a mistake to deduce that this reflected a general mood in the Conservative Party (Field in Kelly forthcoming).¹⁶⁹ However on entering office, Joseph was disappointed that the scope for claw-back was too small and that another solution would have to be found because of the election pledge (Stacpoole interview). Joseph worked closely with a group of civil servants to adapt the housing allowance scheme and thus formulate the principles of FIS (Stacpoole interview). Joseph, on the introduction of FIS, argued that the CPAG plan would lower the tax threshold, transfer income from tax allowances, which were popular, to less popular benefits (see chapter 8.2.4) and not give as much to the lowest income households as FIS (Hansard 1970 vol.806 p.221). He repeated this directly to CPAG in a letter (12.11.70, box 69, PTA).

Unaware of the progress towards a means tested solution, Townsend tried to deter Joseph from a means tested approach in a letter dated just two days before FIS was introduced (26.10.70, file 4, box 65, PTA). By early November an anti-FIS

¹⁶⁸ Member of the Shadow Cabinet for Education

¹⁶⁹ Both Field and Stacpoole suggest that Macleod was certainly not acting from a solid Conservative base.

campaign had been launched jointly with some trade unions and with TUC support (see chapter 8.1.1.2). Shirley Williams, Labour's Social Security spokesperson was briefed by CPAG on the arguments against FIS (CPAG to Williams 9.11.70, File 4, Box 65, PTA). Labour MPs attacked FIS for holding down wages like its Eighteenth Century predecessor, the Speenhamland scheme (Hansard vol 806 p.225-6). However CPAG faced similar problems to the Conservative government. Lynes wrote to Townsend that the scope for claw-back was only five shillings, otherwise the three child family would be worse off than the two child family. In short, claw-back was not possible. Lynes' only suggestion was a meeting with Abel-Smith, Piachaud and at Joseph's agreement civil servants to formulate a viable solution (Lynes to Townsend 1.11.70, Box 69, PTA). However, neither CPAG nor the Conservative Party had realised this prior to the election (Lynes to Townsend 1.11.70, Box 69, PTA and Bull interview). Certainly, with FIS at only eight million pounds, it was a cheap option for the Conservatives, but it appeared also to be the only feasible answer (Stacpoole and Dean interviews). It was also a popular one with voters. Three fifths of respondents to a Gallup poll agreed with a means tested solution in 1970 (Gallup 1976 p.931). Despite its protests CPAG was left without a better short term answer.

The Conservatives had a different ideology to the Labour Party (and therefore to that of most of CPAG's members). To the Conservatives, selectivity was the answer, targeting help on the poorest (Joseph 1967 p.18, Conservative manifesto 1970). To Joseph unlike CPAG, FIS was an acceptable solution to family poverty (Wendt interview). Field certainly recognised this and understood that CPAG's best hopes were to get the best possible deals within the framework of Conservative policy (see chapter 4.2.3.2). The Conservatives were aware of CPAG's members' Leftist leanings but appreciated the fact that they were realistic. "They were not the kind of people that were after the earth, they realised that they were not going to get that" (Dean interview). Hence the acceptance of the inevitability of VAT (because of entry into the European Economic Community) in CPAG's 1972 memorandum to the Chancellor, and the attempt to influence the greatest number of exemptions (Field 1972 p.10-11). CPAG's evidence to the Fisher Committee on Social Security abuse in 1973 did not

question the government's right to tackle abuse. Instead it argued that the extent was far lower than the popular conception and asked for more safeguards and reforms to the anti-abuse measures already in place (Field and Grieve 1973 p.14). Therefore CPAG's main argument was that if the government could give so much away in reduced taxes for the rich it could give better non-means tested help to the poor (CPAG 1972 p.12).

The Conservative's tax credit scheme was to cost £1,300 million and would be paid for out of the proceeds of economic growth. It was in the tax credit scheme that the Conservative government came close to meeting CPAG's most basic demand. Every citizen would be entitled to a tax credit, which was four pounds for a single person or married man, two pounds for a married woman (she also kept her tax relief if she worked) and two pounds for each child. There were, however, a number of exceptions, the most important being that people earning less than eight pounds per week, SB claimants and the self employed would not be included. The former two groups were excluded because the credits proposed were too small to bring them over the poverty line. It was only by keeping the credits at a non-subsistence rate that the scheme could be contemplated. More generous credits or higher tax would have been intolerably expensive or created too large disincentives (Le Grand and Robinson 1984 p.252, see chapter 7.1.2.1) The latter group was excluded because of administrative problems.

The proposed two pound child tax credit would have fulfilled CPAG's 1972 and 1973 demands for higher family allowances (although CPAG wanted it linked to average wages). However, the tax credit plans were not a response to CPAG pressure. They were the result of a long held belief in the Party that the benefits and taxation systems for people in work had to be brought together in order to target help better and create incentives (Internal paper 11.5.72, ACP/3/20 (72) 76, CPA). Yet, the Conservatives knew that if they did nothing about the poverty trap, CPAG was likely to attack them mercilessly. CPAG's arguments that £1,300 million could be better spent (Meacher 1973) made little impact on a government obsessed with the tidiness, selectivity and radicalism of its proposals.¹⁷⁰ Yet, CPAG's argument that the tax credit should be paid to the mother was more

¹⁷⁰ E.g. At Selsdon, the Shadow Cabinet was in favour on principle.

successful. This was firstly because the influential Conservative Women's Advisory Committee had independently fought for this within the Conservative Party (Select Committee on Tax Credits 1973 p.191). Secondly, because the Conservatives were probably easier to convince than a Labour government. When Kaldor had described a similar scheme of child tax credits in 1968, he had argued for payment to the father to avoid reducing take home pay and upsetting the incomes policy (21.11.68, T227/2617 PRO). Male trade unionists were key voters for the Labour Party, whereas women were target voters for the Conservative Party (CRD 3/9/93 p.5). Hence the Conservatives had less to lose.

It was fortunate for CPAG that Joseph was made the Secretary of State for Social Services in the Heath government. He was deeply concerned about the problem of child poverty and prioritised it (Wendt interview, Halcrow 1989 p.52 and 83, Joseph 1967 p.11). One of his first actions on entering his new department was to have a internal seminar on family poverty (Appointments Diary 23.6.70), presumably to flag up solutions. It is probable that it was at this meeting that Joseph was made aware that the means tested solution had already been worked out. On other issues such as abuse, Joseph was a moderate in his party and refused to succumb to back-bench pressure for draconian measures (Hansard vol. 838 13.6.72 p.1231-4 and vol.842 8.8.72 p.1473-4).

In the DHSS, Joseph's genuine concern about child poverty and his personal approach of listening intently and cerebrally to all arguments (Bradshaw and Wendt interviews) made a constructive working relationship between him and Field (Wendt interview).¹⁷¹ Although questioning the methods of selectivity, Field made it clear that there was no doubt about Joseph's genuine sincerity in wishing to abolish poverty in the lifetime of the Parliament (CPAG 1972 p.6). It is Wendt's view that the fact that CPAG and the government were of different ideological perspectives improved the relationship. It was a more normal exchange of views and the relationship was far more relaxed than it had been with the Labour government (Wendt interview). Joseph attended the CPAG AGM of 1971, where he received a standing ovation (Halcrow 1989 p.52).

¹⁷¹ The good relationship between the two men continued in the House of Commons, when Field became a politician. There was a great deal of respect between them.

Dean remembers meetings taking place between himself as Under-Secretary in charge of Social Security and CPAG. He also remembers a fair amount of correspondence and CPAG material reaching himself and Joseph. He argues that CPAG's realism and the quality of its research meant that he and Joseph took notice of what they said (Dean interview). Although Wendt and Stacpoole argue that CPAG offered little new information (Wendt and Stacpoole interviews), Dean argues that the fact that CPAG had academic distinction and was also in touch with the poor made it a useful source (Dean interview).

However, even if Joseph had not been so concerned about child poverty, he would still have had to take CPAG seriously (Wendt interview). CPAG had good connections with the media and were able to use it to apply pressure to the government.¹⁷² When Margaret Thatcher, as Education Secretary, allowed a civil servant to reply to a letter from CPAG, CPAG got a story in the diary page of *The Times* saying that Thatcher was the only Minister who did not reply directly to the poor (Field 1982 p.58). Certainly the impression gained from Wendt, Stacpoole and Dean is that the government found it useful to keep account of what CPAG was saying. CPAG arguments could be used in the Cabinet and in Treasury battles (Dean interview).

When working with the Conservative administration there were two practical difficulties for CPAG compared to when Labour was in power. The first was institutional. The Conservative government was lacking a tier of ministers in the DHSS compared to the previous Labour administration (see appendices G.1). Thus CPAG had fewer ministers with whom to speak. However, Joseph trusted with Paul Dean the day-to-day responsibility of Social Security (Dean interview) and was very interested in Social Security policy himself. In addition CPAG still had its annual meetings with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The second difficulty was that whereas CPAG had had good contacts with ministers through the Labour Party (particularly the SPSC), it never had equivalent links with high ranking Conservatives.¹⁷³ Field used the court page of *The Times* to discover who was close to Heath. He discovered that Dame Diana Elles was part of Heath's

¹⁷² A third (34%) of their press releases after 18.6.70 were successful with at least one of the four papers studied in Chapter 8.

¹⁷³ CPAG did have a good relationship with certain Conservative MPs like Timothy Raison, who was the owner and editor of *New Society*. However it did not know any of the Cabinet.

circle and she was very helpful to CPAG in influencing Heath (Field 1982 p.55). hence an indirect influence to the Prime Minister. Also there was the opportunity to “lobby” politicians at party conference (see chapter 7.1.1.1).

6.4 *Influencing the Supplementary Benefits Commission*

The SBC was, like the NAB before it, an executive agency established to administer non-contributory benefits. The day to day running of the SBC was the responsibility of civil servants, headed by the Secretary. Wider policy issues were formulated by the Commissioners, who from December 1967 included Titmuss, as deputy chair (see appendix G.3). There were two ways in which the SBC was important to the CPAG. Firstly, it did have the responsibility for administering benefits. The actual flat rate of SB was set by the government, however the various additions and most of the rules which decided exactly who was eligible for what benefit were administered by the SBC. However, the SBC could make decisions affecting only one pound in every twenty by 1975 (Donnison 1982 p.17). The second way in which the SBC was important to CPAG was its power to influence the government through the Chair’s regular meetings and correspondence with the Minister.

CPAG was in favour of a rights based system in which clear, open regulations would entitle claimants to benefit. There were two ways in which CPAG wanted to achieve its goal of ending discretion. Firstly, through persuading the SBC to make clear its policies. This was done through correspondence, meetings and use of the media. Secondly, CPAG used its expertise to challenge SBC policy both at tribunal level and in the courts. In addition to clarifying SBC policy, CPAG tried to persuade the SBC to be more generous to claimants with its regulations. This brought immediate relief for the poor, encouraged the staff and supporters of CPAG and gave CPAG some success to claim.

Certainly CPAG was taken seriously by the SBC. Firstly, they kept a file between 1965 and 1969 of correspondence with and about CPAG (AST 31/27 PRO). This was not the case for any other pressure group. Secondly, the chair, Hayward, took them seriously. He was anxious to “maintain good relations” with Tony Lynes partly because he was impressed with Lynes’ “intellectual integrity” and “sincere

concern for people in poverty” However he also believed that CPAG would “become an important pressure group” (30.12.66, AST 31/27 PRO). It was clear to the Chair that the subject of low income families was becoming “increasingly topical and urgent” and the existence of CPAG was mentioned at an early SBC commission meeting (23.11.66 AST 1 PRO). The Commissioners discussed policies brought to their attention by CPAG. Correspondence from CPAG was always answered politely, thoughtfully and fully. The Chair was willing to meet Lynes and later Field to discuss policy issues.¹⁷⁴

CPAG’s success was varied. CPAG pressure on the SBC to review its policy of refusing to pay “unreasonably high” rents in full was to no effect (SBC Minutes 12.6.67 AST 31/27 PRO). However, CPAG did have more success in influencing the policy on the wage stop, which the SBC was already reviewing (23.11.66 AST 1 PRO). The CPAG anti-wage stop campaign of 1967 worried the SBC. With CPAG members and social workers representing wage stopped claimants in the local SBC offices, Headquarters issued advice to managers. Offices were warned not to attempt to “buy CPAG off” and were asked for comments on the activities of CPAG (Minute 117/67, AST 31/27 PRO). The original stance that the SBC would not make recommendations about the wage stop was ignored (23.11.66 AST 1 PRO). Some of the recommendations, such as wage stop claimants being given a written explanation of their benefit had been long called for by CPAG (25.11.66 AST 31/27 PRO). Although the Commissioners decided that the wage stop stance was correct in principle because the alternative was to reduce incentives to work (SBC minutes 27.9.67 AST 1 PRO), the fact that CPAG’s viewpoint was on the agenda is an indication of the Commissioners’ regard for CPAG’s views even at this early stage.¹⁷⁵

CPAG was partially successful in its campaign to have wage stopped claimants, unaware of their rights to a rate rebate, compensated. Hayward rejected full compensation saying that it was the claimant’s responsibility to claim and they

¹⁷⁴ Lynes met Hayward 22.12.66 informally to discuss wage stop and Field met him in late May 1969 (AST 31/27). There may well have been other meetings.

¹⁷⁵ Given the need to preserve incentives the wage stop was not abolished until 1975. Ironically it was the expansion in the number of means tested benefits that could be claimed by people in work (especially housing benefits and FIS) that reduced the numbers affected to a quarter of the 1960s peak (Beltram interview).

would only be helped with debts incurred. (26.1.68 AST 31/27 PRO). Lynes rejected this and Hayward felt obliged to write to the Minister warning her of CPAG's dissatisfaction (BN 72/78 PRO). However, it is unlikely that the claimants would have got anything at all if it had not been for CPAG's campaign.

CPAG's short-term goal for the Social Security system was for it to move towards a codified system of rights rather than discretion (see chapter 5.1.1). Pressure from CPAG led to a discussion by the SBC in early 1968 as to whether the "A" code should indeed be published. Although it was agreed that it was not appropriate to publish internal instructions and that the A code's size and frequent changes would make it expensive, it was decided that some kind of handbook should be published. One of the Commissioners, Kay Carmichael (a social worker who had been editor of Case Conference) applauded the fact that social workers had become interested in welfare rights (SBC minutes 28.2.68 AST 1 PRO). Thus, although the "A" code remained internal CPAG had succeeded in convincing the SBC of the need to publicise its rules.

However, the SBC was also concerned to keep its policies in line with what it perceived to be the general public's view. Although under pressure from CPAG and the Home Office, the SBC reviewed its policy of paying for prisoners' wives to visit their husbands only every three months to paying for bi-monthly visits, it refused to pay for the monthly visit recommended by the Home Office. The main reason being that prisoners' wives were an unpopular group and to be too generous would generate adverse publicity for the SBC (SBC minutes 28.2.67, 22.11.67 AST 1 PRO). Despite Tony Lynes success at overturning the decision at tribunal, the SBC refused to change its policy (Lynes 1968b p.13). The decision to pay for monthly visits became a reality once the costs were moved to the Home Office, this had long been its policy

Similarly, the cohabitation rule was considered necessary to prevent unmarried couples being treated more generously than married couples. Although pressure from CPAG resorted in the SBC stipulating that only Executive Officers¹⁷⁶ were allowed to stop payments (22.1.69 AST 1 PRO), the SBC agreed not to relax the cohabitation rule, with which there was widespread approval amongst MPs, civil

¹⁷⁶ The local office team leaders.

servants and the general public. Despite a CPAG media campaign in 1972, the government was unwilling to consider any regulatory change.

However even when CPAG was not successful in getting any policy change, it did manage to force the SBC to justify and explain its policies to CPAG. An example of this is the SBC's policy on asking unmarried mothers for the details of the child's father. The SBC was forced to clarify and justify its policy (11.7.69, AST 31/27 PRO) It meant that the SBC's position was clear to CPAG and could be made widely available through *Poverty* and later *LAG Bulletins*, therefore ensuring that the central SBC policy was followed at a local level. Yet much of the subjective language in SBC instructions such as "extreme hardship" remained and local officials were still left with a large amount of discretion (Beltram interview).

The SBC records at the time of writing were only open until the end of 1969. Little of the correspondence before and after 1969 has survived in the Townsend archive and after 1970 much of the liaison with the SBC would have been through the CRO¹⁷⁷. However there is every reason to believe that CPAG continued to lobby the SBC after 1969 for small but important policy changes. The SBC maintained an interest in CPAG with the Chair, Lord Collison writing for *Poverty* in the 1970s (Collison 1971, 1972). With the proliferation of welfare rights activities by the branches and the work of the Legal Department and CRO, it is likely that the lobbying intensified.

The SBC was closely linked to the MSS/DHSS. The Chair of the SBC kept in regular contact with Hart whilst she was Minister.¹⁷⁸ The Minister was therefore kept informed of not only CPAG campaigns but also of other pressure groups such as the National Old People's Welfare Council and CABx (Hayward to Hart 26.1.68 and 29.1.68, AST 31/59, PRO). There is little evidence that the topics that they discussed arose from the pressure of CPAG or any other pressure group. Indeed some of the issues on which they wanted to take action such as reducing the SB's responsibility for students with dependants and strikers were in opposition to CPAG policy.

¹⁷⁷ For which there are no known records.

¹⁷⁸ Presumably this closeness continued under Crossman/Ennals and Joseph/Dean.

When the MSS consulted the SBC over the plans to increase family allowances with claw-back in March 1967, the SBC's memo was extremely positive. It recommended family allowances of eighteen shillings and twenty shillings (for second and third children respectively) and argued that family allowances should make up the major part of the younger child's SB allowance and half of that of older children. It applauded this strategy as widening the gap between those in and out of work but warned if it widened too far, long term SB recipients would be further disadvantaged (13.3.67 AST31/59, PRO). Again in 1969, the SBC was represented on the DHSS working party investigating family support (headed by the Crossman), which was designed to feed into the main inter-department working party under Serpill (see above). This working party accepted the inter-related nature of child dependency allowances (on NI and SB), child tax allowances and family allowances at its core (25.2.69 AST 31/59, PRO).

Clearly, the views expressed by the SBC on family allowances were close to those of CPAG. However there is no evidence to link the two. It is clear from the SBC records that it was aware of CPAG and knew of its views. These views may have influenced the Commission and officials within the SBC. However, they also came from within. Titmuss, the deputy chair, had pressured Houghton for a "give and take" scheme before CPAG had been established thus he independently agreed with this goal (see chapter 3.3.1). The SBC itself had been investigating scale rates since the early 1960s (see chapter 3.2.3.1) and it was the SBC's own research that proved that the child rates had not risen with the adults (13.3.67 AST31/59, PRO). Therefore it was not just that CPAG was pushing but that the SBC itself wanted to reform (Beltram interview). Considering the research and expertise in the SBC, it would be inaccurate to suggest that the SBC's ideas about family allowances and child support were gained purely from CPAG influence. However, CPAG did have an influence on the SBC and the Commission did consider its views. Therefore it would seem likely that the SBC's suggestions to first the Minister and later the Secretary of State were formulated internally but that the officials and commissioners were open to CPAG ideas.

6.5 CPAG's Effectiveness in Influencing Government and the SBC

When evaluating CPAG's effectiveness in influencing the government and the SBC, both the methods open to CPAG and changes over time need to be evaluated. Throughout the period CPAG was a high profile insider group. It attempted to influence ministers and civil servants directly and used external channels such as the media and Parliament. The first tactic was used by both Lynes and Field to build up a relationship with the key politicians and civil servants. Lynes, in particular, worked with the Minister to gain the best deal possible from the Treasury. Similarly Field built up a relationship with Joseph, which led to CPAG being able to at least explain its policies and views to the ministers and civil servants. Field adapted CPAG's policies to make them acceptable to a government, which had a different political philosophy to most of CPAG's leadership. Certainly ministers and civil servants believed that it was realistic in its demands.

There were four key moments when the government adopted CPAG policy: the 1967 up-rating of family allowances, the 1968 up-rating of family allowances, the Macleod commitment to the use of claw-back and the announcement that child tax credits would be paid to the mother. In all these cases it was CPAG's use of external channels of influence, most notably the media, which forced the government to make the change. However the tone of the pressure did change during the period. This shift was not only due to the change in director but also the change in political environment (Field in Kelly forthcoming).

The Lynes approach of using the media and Parliament to support and question the Minister for Social Security resulted in a doubling of family allowances. This was taken further in 1968 but then it was the DEA, concerned about the devaluation, which pushed for the rise. However in 1970, given the unpopularity of the claw-back and the pre-occupation of Crossman with his pension plans, there was a need for a campaign which would embarrass the government into action. In order to direct attention onto child poverty again, CPAG needed to make an impact as *The Poor and the Poorest* had done in 1965. They could not rediscover poverty again, instead they "discovered" that contrary to Labour Party ideology

and Labour government boasts, relative poverty had increased under Labour. Although this argument was weak and the findings were stretched by spin, the fact that the government could not disprove it either, meant that the government was forced into reacting. The policy auction, into which general elections descend, meant that the Conservatives pledged support for claw-back, unaware of its impossibility. However this pledge meant that the Conservatives had to do something about child poverty when in office. CPAG may not have liked FIS but the fact that it was introduced so quickly suggests that family poverty was a priority for the government. The campaign for child tax credits to be paid to the mother was successful but there were also calls for this from within the Conservative Party and had no adverse effect on Conservative target voters.

Despite CPAG's high profile within the DHSS by 1969, its lack of impact on the Treasury, despite regular meetings with the Chancellor, was problematic. Even if the DHSS was convinced of CPAG's arguments, the Treasury could thwart its plans. In the 1970s CPAG became more aware of this and directed the 1972 memorandum to the Chancellor of the Exchequer rather than the Secretary of State. Yet influence over the Treasury probably remained limited throughout the period. It was CPAG's ability to use the media and Parliament to force the government to make some kind of response to the problems CPAG identified that led to the significant policy changes. The lobbying of the civil service and SBC however did lead to some smaller changes in policy. The risk of acting as a catalyst was that the government's chosen response might not be CPAG's favoured policy, as with the introduction of FIS.

7 Chapter Seven: CPAG's Relationship with the Political Parties

This chapter focuses on CPAG's relationship with the political parties. Contact with the leadership of both parties was crucial. How effective was CPAG at using both party and Parliamentary channels to reach the highest levels of power? Both the government and the Opposition are aware of the need to carry the grassroots of the party and the back-benches of Parliament with them. Was CPAG able to convince the rank and file of their cause? The party out of power is deprived of the official bureaucracy and relies on its own bureaucracy to develop its future policies. To what degree was CPAG able to influence this process? Finally, given the left-wing composition of CPAG, was it able to present a bi-partisan image? This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first examines CPAG's relationship with the political parties (concentrating on the Labour and Conservative Parties). The second discusses the possibilities that Parliament offered the CPAG campaign.

7.1 The Political Parties

Establishing a relationship with the political parties is in general a "relatively undeveloped aspect of the work of [pressure] groups" (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.102). However CPAG was one of a minority of groups in the 1970s to make contact with the political parties.¹⁷⁹ Firstly there were the annual party conferences. Secondly, CPAG had an overlapping membership with the Labour Party's Social Policy Advisory Committee and the group sought to establish links with the research departments of both the main political parties. CPAG's contact with individual MPs and Parliamentary back-bench committees of the political parties are covered in the second section of this chapter (see below 7.2).

7.1.1 Influencing the Parties: The Party Conferences

From 1966 onwards CPAG attended the Labour Party conferences. It also attended the Liberal Party Assembly from 1967 and from 1970 the Conservative

¹⁷⁹ Only 38% of the groups in Whiteley and Winyard's poverty lobby in the 1970s had contacts with the political parties (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.89-90)

Party conference. CPAG hoped to achieve three things from the conferences. Firstly, it wanted to bring the delegates' attention to the problems of poverty through fringe meetings and briefings. Secondly, from 1973 it attempted to get its policies on to Labour's manifesto through resolutions. Thirdly, conferences were useful places for networking with (shadow) ministers and influential people (including trade unionists at Labour conferences).

7.1.1.1 Fringe Meetings and Briefings

The fringe meetings varied in their success from year to year and between the political parties. The least success was achieved with the Conservative Party. Only in 1970 did the meeting attract a large number of delegates. This was mostly due to the fact that the new Secretary of State for Social Services, Sir Keith Joseph, debated with Townsend, and Mervyn Pike chaired the debate. In contrast only ten people attended the two meetings in 1972. This was partly because the Conservative Party refused to advertise the event unless CPAG paid the commercial rates for diary space (Weir and Streather 1972, file 6, box 65, PTA). In 1973, CPAG did not even hold a meeting, although it attended and sold literature (Weir and Streather 1973, file 7, box 65, PTA).

The Liberal and Labour Party conferences were more successful. In 1966, CPAG attended only the Labour Party conference but it was a success. Houghton, the Social Services overlord, spoke and a hundred delegates attended (CPAG Secretary's report 4.11.66, file 1, box 65, PTA). The 1967 meeting was far less successful. The main reason for this was that the meeting hall was a mile from the main conference centre. Another reason was that the speaker was David Owen, a back-bench MP rather than a minister. However the disappointment of that year was softened by the success of a teach-in at the conference which Judith Hart, the Social Security Minister attended (Secretary's report 13.10.67, file 1, box 65, PTA). The 1968 Liberal conference was actually more successful than the Labour conference, with both meetings being held jointly with Shelter. This was probably sensible given CPAG's chronic financial situation in that year. Yet, although the merger deal with Shelter was still being considered (see chapter 4.2.1.1), the EC concluded that the joint conference strategy did not work and that CPAG would

be better to act independently at conferences in future (Secretary's report 13.9.68, HWP).

Despite the bitterness between CPAG and Labour during the election campaign of that year, the 1970 fringe meeting was rather successful. Shirley Williams, the Social Security spokesperson agreed to speak with Townsend. Jack Jones also agreed to speak. CPAG was anxious to court Jones, who as the leader of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) was closely aligned with the cause of pensioners. CPAG wanted his voice to be added to the campaign for better family allowances (see chapter 8.1). Although CPAG failed to attract a high ranking Labour speaker for the 1971 conference (AGM Report 25.9.71, File 5, Box 65, PTA), it was far more successful in 1972 (Weir and Streather 1972, file 4, box 65, PTA). This convinced CPAG that it needed to plan early for a big meeting in 1973 (Weir and Streather 1972, file 4, box 65, PTA). Thus in 1973 five hundred delegates attended a huge meeting with big name speakers such as Jack Jones, Tony Benn and Joan Lester (Weir and Streather 1973, file 7, box 65, PTA).

The key to arranging a successful meeting was to attract big names as speakers. All the most successful meetings had front bench politicians. It was also important for the meetings to be well advertised and very close to the conference centre as the failures of the 1972 Conservative and the 1967 Labour conferences illustrate. It was also important not to clash with other attractive events. Weir and Streather complained that Conservative delegates preferred cocktail parties (Weir and Streather 1972, file 4, box 65, PTA). However they were able to solve this problem in 1973 for the Labour conference by having the meeting the first evening, when the delegates were mostly *in situ* but nothing was officially planned (Weir interview). However as Minkin argues most fringe meetings preach to the converted (Minkin 1978 p.154). Thus the Labour Party rank and file delegates were more likely to be interested in CPAG issues than their Conservative counterparts. CPAG was aware of this fact and although it had to be seen at Conservative conferences, in reality it attached far lower priority to them than it did to the Labour conferences (Weir interview). Similarly, CPAG attached less importance to the sympathetic Liberal Party because (except in the event of a hung Parliament) it carried little political weight (Weir interview).

7.1.1.2 Networking with the powerful and CPAG Aggrandisement.

Conferences offered CPAG the opportunity to meet ministers or shadow ministers and other influential party figures in an informal setting without civil servants. Bradshaw remembers discussing family poverty with Sir Keith Joseph whilst he was Social Security Minister (Bradshaw interview). However, politicians are at their most partisan at conference and front bench politicians are very busy. In short, the atmosphere is not conducive to such lobbying (Dean interview). Yet all sorts of organisations and industries invested in conference stalls and meetings, which suggests that CPAG was not the only group to see the value in the exposure that just being there gave to the issues and the profile of the group (Grant 1995 p.83). For a small group like CPAG investing in a meeting hall was worth the cost if “big names” from the party could be persuaded to speak and thus create the impression in the delegates minds that “this was a group that it was proper and necessary to deal with” (Field interview).

7.1.1.3 Writing Labour’s 1974 Manifesto

After an exploratory visit to the Labour conference in 1972, Weir and Streather realised that conference could be used not only to educate delegates through fringe meetings but also as a way, via resolutions, to put CPAG policies on the Labour manifesto. In this sense the Labour Party was unique because of its democratic structure. All Constituency Labour Parties (CLP), trades unions and affiliated socialist societies had the right to submit resolutions to be discussed at conference. These resolutions had to be seconded by another such body. There is then a process of compositing, which allows overlapping resolutions to be merged. Resolutions are then debated and if accepted by the conference are then added to the manifesto (Minkin 1978 p.140ff). The Conservative Party had no such structure and although motions were moved and debated this did not give these motions automatic inclusion in the drafting of the 1974 manifesto.

CPAG had influence at all three stages. In 1973, it exploited the overlap between CLPs and CPAG branches. CPAG members persuaded their local CLP to adopt or support a CPAG resolution for conference (Streather interview). Secondly, CPAG had sympathisers at the compositing stage. They would offer a draft of the

composite as this ensured not only CPAG wording but that the sympathiser would move the composite at conference (Weir interview). Thirdly, Weir used his journalistic contacts to gain passes for the CPAG conference team. This meant that they could influence responses to the debate from the floor (Weir interview). A briefing paper was also produced (CPAG 1973).

The strategy was successful, with twenty-one of CPAG's resolutions and five CPAG amendments being adopted. CPAG also had contact with the drafters on two more resolutions (see appendix H.1). These resolutions were condensed down to five and half composites;¹⁸⁰ of these three and a half were successful. In 1972, there had been six resolutions for the minimum wage, one for family allowances and seven dealing with SB issues. In 1973, there were fourteen, seven and thirteen respectively (Weir and Streather 1973 p.2). However the success was limited in two ways. Firstly, CPAG was unable to prevent controversial items such as a home responsibility allowance (giving carers an income as of right) or a high national minimum wage being included on composites. These controversial items led to the failure of the whole composite. Although Streather and Weir assured the EC they could prevent this from happening the next year (Weir and Streather 1973 p.5), it is difficult to see how they could prevent other interests from using the composite process as they themselves were doing.

Secondly, CPAG could not influence the structure of the conference. This meant that there was no debate on poverty. Therefore their resolution on the minimum wage was rejected by the NEC on the grounds that low pay was a problem of the 'social wage.' This related to the social contract that was in the process of being agreed by the Labour Party and the TUC to restrict wage demands in exchange for social benefits such as better public services and benefits especially for pensioners and children. However, two days later the NEC opposed the family allowances resolution. There was little chance to relate the two (Weir and Streather 1970 p.9). Barbara Castle, however, commented on this problem (Weir and Streather 1973 p.4). In 1974 there was a debate on the elimination of poverty (Labour Party Conference 1974 p.240-3).

¹⁸⁰ Only half of the sixth composite was relevant to CPAG

7.1.1.4 The Attitude of Conferences to Family Poverty

The crisis of the rediscovery of poverty in late 1965 placed family poverty back on the conference agenda. It was not discussed at the 1965 Labour or Conservative conferences. In contrast, there was not enough time to hear all thirty-four people who wanted to speak on it at the 1966 Conservative conference (Conservative Party 1966 p.130-4). Similarly, a concern for low-income families, the wage stop (see chapter 1.3.) and the inadequacy of EMAs (see chapter 1.4.) re-emerged at the Labour conference in 1966 (Labour Party 1966 p.122 and 175). Although the parties were united in their concern about the problem, they were divided in their solutions. There was widespread support within the Conservative Party for selective help concentrated on the poor, whilst in the Labour Party there was widespread opposition to means testing. Thus from 1968 there were calls at the Conservative Party conference to abolish family allowances (Conservative Party 1968 p.89,90,92, 1970 p.48-54). FIS was widely applauded in 1970 (Conservative Party 1970 p.48-54). There were annual calls for higher family allowances and a national minimum wage at the Labour conferences (Labour Party 1967 p.286, 1968 p.133 and 309, 1969 p.278, 1970 p.243, 1972 p.309, 1973 p.138-158, 231-234). In 1967 a composite, introduced by Iain Jordan of SPAG in his capacity as Edinburgh CLP delegate, urged the abolition of the wage stop, increased family allowances, a minimum wage and a better deal for the low paid with earnings related benefits. These were all CPAG issues and it is likely that he consulted with national CPAG on the matter (Labour Party 1967 p.286).¹⁸¹ However CPAG's greatest influence at the Conservative conference and until 1973 at the Labour conference, was its ability through the media and Parliament to put poverty back onto and keep it on the agenda.

7.1.2 CPAG's overlapping membership with the Labour Party and the Labour Party Social Policy Sub-Committee (SPSC)¹⁸²

CPAG had a significant membership overlap with the Labour Party. This was advantageous for links with the Labour Party in two ways. The first was that the

¹⁸¹ Although this composite was remitted to the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party (NEC) for consideration, the NEC did not give it any subsequent examination. (SPSC and NEC files LPA).

¹⁸² Originally called the Social Policy Advisory Committee but will be referred to throughout as SPSC for the sake of simplicity.

overlap allowed for the 1973 resolution strategy discussed above. The second was that not only did certain members of the EC know Labour (shadow) ministers on a personal level but that some CPAG EC members were members of Labour's SPSC.

Until the end of 1968 and then again from the beginning of 1971, SPSC met to formulate policy suggestions on social policy. It reported to the Home Policy Sub-Committee (HSPC), which itself reported to NEC, the top policy-making body of the Labour Party. The committee consisted of a number of the NEC and some co-opted trade union members, MPs, and sympathetic academics. McCarthy argues that between 1964 and 1976 some 24% of SPSC members had some link with the CPAG (McCarthy 1986 p.123). He asserts that the CPAG supporters on the committee helped to contribute to the debate and kept the issue of poverty on the boil. Further, he concludes that without CPAG's representation on the SPSC the government's resolve towards social policy may have been weaker (McCarthy 1986 p.121). He quotes Bosanquet as saying that CPAG heavily influenced SPSC and Townsend as arguing that it drew its inspiration from CPAG (McCarthy 1986 p.118).

However, McCarthy overstated the importance of CPAG on the SPSC. Firstly, fully-fledged CPAG members were few. Abel-Smith had resigned from CPAG's EC in October 1968, Lynes became active on SPSC after leaving CPAG, Michael Meacher only joined in 1971. Therefore, only Townsend was (almost) continuously on SPSC and had a key role in CPAG.¹⁸³ Most of the other members that McCarthy links with the CPAG were simply people who had worked with the CPAG on certain issues or were sympathetic MPs.

Secondly, as McCarthy notes, even the CPAG members were not on the SPSC as CPAG representatives (1986 p.117). They had been "Labour's backroom boys" before CPAG was established (Townsend interview). Therefore, they were serving in a different capacity from that of a member of CPAG's EC member (Townsend interview). This is important as Townsend's interests certainly went much wider than child poverty, talking in 1967-8 about the need for a social plan and a number

¹⁸³ He was not included on SPSC in 1971 and did not rejoin until January 1972. In addition Tony Atkinson was on the Finance and Economic Affairs Sub-Committee

of social policies and in 1973 about disability pensions (Re 173 and RD 840, LPA). Similarly Lynes wrote a paper on pensions (SPSC minutes June 1971, LPA). SPSC did of course discuss and recommend a number of policies, which were similar to CPAG's.¹⁸⁴ However the following example illustrates that it was CPAG as an outside group not as an inside group that was putting pressure on the SPSC. The SPSC reported to HPSC that on January 10 1966 SPSC had decided to concentrate on two issues; firstly immigration and secondly the role of family allowances and child tax allowances (HPSC minutes 26.1.66, LPA). However this was not due to CPAG pressure on SPSC but a response to the general concern about family poverty which CPAG had initiated a few weeks earlier. CPAG's memorandum was discussed in January 1966 (SPSC minutes 27.1.66, LPA) not in July 1965 when it was first presented.

In 1971, CPAG did gain some important influence over a working group, the Working Group on Pensions and the Pensioner, Means Tests and Charges and Poverty and Groups in Need (WGP). Five of the thirteen members were or had been CPAG EC members (RD 250, February 1972, SPSC, LPA). One of the three papers it produced was written by the former Parliamentary Secretary at the DHSS, Brian O'Malley. It concentrated on the tax/benefit structure in relation to child's benefits. Although the original paper outlined a wide range of possible options for child endowment¹⁸⁵ (RD 246 January 1972, SPSC), the resultant policy paper for the HPSC, which combined all three papers, advocated tax free family allowances paid for by the abolition of child tax allowances. This coupled with higher tax thresholds it was argued would ease family poverty (RD 292, SPSC, LPA). Therefore CPAG's preferred policy succeeded. Yet by 1972, the idea was mainstream with Conservative tax credit proposals offering similar outcomes. Family poverty still did not become a priority for SPSC and was not even

¹⁸⁴ The whole question of welfare or citizen's rights became an issue in 1972, prompted by Lynes discussion of means tests in another of the three papers (RD 238, LPA). A SPSC report of January 1972 made recommendations for welfare rights officers, the simplification of means tested benefits and the active advocacy of social workers which could have been lifted from a CPAG pamphlet. However it stopped short of arguing for the abolition of means testing (RD 232 p.3-4, LPA). In November 1972, a working group on the issue was established with Lynes as Chair (SPSC minutes 27.11.72, LPA). Certainly the sentiments of SPSC and the working group were similar to CPAG's.

¹⁸⁵ These included the main options of a choice between tax allowances and family allowances (which had been the policy of the Conservatives before the 1970 election, CRD/9/72-5) and the amalgamation of family allowances and child tax allowances to produce a tax free child endowment. Also smaller changes such as including first children, age grading of allowances, claw-back of less than 100%, increasing both child tax allowances and family allowances (RD 246 January 1972, SPSC).

discussed at the SPSC/TUC joint meeting (part of the social contract negotiations) in October 1973 (SPSC minutes, 24.10.73, LPA).

The working party on disability worked explicitly with DIG (SPSC minutes November 1973, LPA). Was a sign of weakness of CPAG that it was not asked to discuss child poverty with a working group or did the presence of CPAG sympathisers on the relevant working party make this unnecessary? The answer lies in the philosophy of the Labour movement. One of the founding principles of the Labour Party had been to abolish poverty. Labour politicians believed they were well qualified to talk about poverty, whereas most were ready to accept that they had less grasp of the issues around disability. Therefore, whereas advice from an expert group (like DIG) on disability was acceptable to the NEC and Parliamentary members of SPSC and HPSC, this was not necessary the case for poverty. In addition SPSC contained a large number of poverty experts already.¹⁸⁶

Apart from the WGP, there is no evidence that CPAG members of SPSC were able to prioritise CPAG issues and solutions on the agenda. In any case, convincing SPSC was not enough. All SPSC papers were filtered through the HPSC and through to NEC. There is little mention in the NEC minutes of family allowances until child benefit became Labour Party policy in 1973 (NEC minutes). In addition SPSC was very weak in the 1960s. Throughout 1967 and 1968 HPSC saw SPSC as ineffective and disappointing (HSPC minutes 23.11.67 and 26.7.67). It was suspended at the end of 1968 and not re-established until 1971. Thus, it was not even operating during the crucial years 1968 to 1970 when CPAG needed to convince the government to take claw-back further. Although it was useful to CPAG to have members on SPSC, the influence of them and of SPSC itself should not be exaggerated.

7.1.2.1 Contacts with the Research Departments of the Parties

The Conservative Party had a well-resourced research department, which was supplemented by a number of sub-committees of the Shadow Cabinet and the back-bench committees of MPs. The Labour Party was more dependent on the NEC which had a number of sub-committees (including HPSC) and sub-

¹⁸⁶ E.g. Lynes, Abel-Smith and Townsend

committees of these committees (including SPSC). These committees were supplemented by a research department, which also produced memoranda. In relation to poverty research Labour could call on a large number of outside academic experts. The Conservatives admitted that there were no leading academic poverty experts who were sympathetic to them (CRD 3/24/9/5, CPA). Thus although the Conservative Bow Group did generate some suggestions, they were more reliant on their own research department, which in turn welcomed input from outside groups.

Lynes argued that whilst he was secretary there was not very much contact with the parties' bureaucracies but more with the individual members of the parties (Lynes interview).¹⁸⁷ This was a logical short-term course of action for CPAG in 1966-9. Lynes had plenty of informal links with the Labour Party because of his own earlier links with the SPSC and the Fabian Society. Thus formal contact with the Labour Party's Research Department was unnecessary. However, this was very much a short-term approach. It relied on Labour taking reasonable action on the problem of poverty whilst it was in power. As CPAG became a long-term pressure group there was a need to develop a good relationship with the policy-making apparatus of both main parties. Thus in 1969, there was an effort under Field to develop links with the research departments of both the Labour and Conservative parties. In summer 1969 Rosemary Marten of the Conservative Party's Research Department (CRD) wrote an article for *Poverty* (Marten 1969 p.9). The CRD used CPAG material and ideas in formulating their own ideas about family allowances and poverty (LCC 67/135 p.2, ACP/3/20/72/76 p.11, CPA). There was good contact between Field and some senior CRD staff (Field interview), who respected his views (Douglas to Morrison 25.1.73, CCO 170/5/61, CPA). However, despite the fact that Heath set up a myriad of policy committees, there was no committee for social security until 1969 (CRD 4/7/77, CPA). This committee then almost solely concentrated on the super-annuated pension scheme. There had been an *ad hoc* group for poverty since 1967 but this was under the auspices of Mervyn Pike, who was ill and had been unable to manage effectively even the Health Committee of which she was chair.

¹⁸⁷ However the Conservative Research Department were acquainted with Lynes and examined his reservations for a negative income tax scheme carefully (Bellairs to Sewill 23.8.68, CRD 4/7/77, CPA)

However CPAG and the CRD were approaching the problem of poverty from two different viewpoints. CPAG were clear that they not only wanted a solution to poverty but they wanted one that did not involve a means test. Douglas, a senior researcher at CRD argued that although the Left was obsessed with universalism, there was no reason why Conservatives should be bound by this socialist principle (Douglas to Morrison 25 January 1973 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). This difference in attitude is clear from the party faithful at the conferences (see above 7.1.1.4). Thus although the CRD respected CPAG's views and were willing to accept the non-party political points, they did not feel bound to their principles. The following case study of the tax credit scheme illustrates this point.

In 1972, CPAG appointed Molly Meacher, the wife of the CPAG EC member and Left-wing Labour MP Michael Meacher, as its researcher for the tax credit scheme. Although the £2 tax credit for children would have satisfied CPAG's child benefit demands, Molly Meacher's report was still critical. She expressed concern that the Green Paper suggested the best solution would be payment to the father and that the self employed, people earning less than £8 per week and SB claimants would be excluded (having to rely on means tested benefits) (Meacher 1973 p.3). She argued that the £1,300 million could be better spent on the existing system (Meacher 1973 p.2). It was these arguments that she articulated to the Conservative Party (Molly Meacher to Morrison 18.12.72 CCO 170/5/61, CPA).

Extending the scheme to make it universal would add considerably to the costs, Douglas argued that income tax might have to be at 70% or 80% to pay for the higher credits and as these high credits would be exempt from tax, the wealthy would benefit. Thus he argued that the suggestion was a wrecking amendment (Douglas to Morrison 25.1.73 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). However, CPAG's insistence that the child tax credit should be paid to the mother was acceptable to the CRD. The green paper had actually left the question open but had preferred the option of payment to the father because it was the administratively simple option (Discussion paper no.53 Feb. 1973 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). The CRD argued that it would be political suicide not to pay the allowance to the mother, given that public opinion wanted to see wives protected and believed a mother would be more likely than the father to spend the money on the children (Discussion paper

no.53 Feb. 1973 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). The growing women's movement was concerned that the allowances should be paid to the mother. However most importantly the Women's National Advisory Committee of the Conservative Party argued strongly that the mother should be no worse off than she was with family allowances (Select Committee on Tax Credits 1973 p.191).

Molly Meacher's plan to persuade MPs' wives from all political parties to sign a Pledge for an universal tax credit scheme which paid child tax credits to the mother worried CRD. Her arguments were "passionate, emotional and superficially attractive", whilst the CRD's were "cold and dull". However the solution to this was to take her arguments apart and to make the CRD's own arguments more attractive (Wolff to Morrison, 4.1.73 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). Thus CPAG's arguments for universal coverage merely worried the CRD into presenting their own arguments better. As far as payment to the mother was concerned CPAG was swimming with the tide of Conservative opinion.

However the case study exposes a weakness in CPAG's selection of a researcher. There can be no doubt of Molly Meacher's intellectual and political skills, but the fact that she was a well-known socialist married to a Labour MP made her suspect to Conservatives. From the private correspondence between Sara Morrison, Deputy Chair of the Conservative Party and the CRD, it is clear that they did not believe that they could work with her (in contrast to Lynes and Field). They referred to her letters as "Molly Meacher's latest antics" (Douglas to Morrison 25.1.73 CCO 170/5/61). The sarcasm in one letter from Morrison to Molly Meacher was scarcely disguised (Morrison to Meacher 30.1.73 CCO 170/5/61, CPA) and another letter was written to "keep her quiet" (Morrison to Harvey 23 February 1973 CCO 170/5/61, CPA). Michael Wolff, a special advisor to the government, wrote to Morrison that "Molly Meacher has nothing to learn from her husband in the downright disingenuous and dishonest use of words and statistics..." (4.1.73 CCO 170/5/61). Thus Molly Meacher's role made the relationship more partisan than it may have been with a less provocative researcher.

7.2 *Parliament*

The usefulness of targeting Parliament is a subject of debate in pressure group analysis. The suggestion has been that groups that “fail” to influence Whitehall resort to using Parliament and other tactics (Norton 1984 p.161, Kavanagh 1985 p.151). Finer argues that promotional groups, due to their lack of influence over the executive are more likely to resort to Parliament and non-governmental tactics (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.86). However this dismissal of the effectiveness of Parliamentary lobbying has been questioned by Judge (1990 p.36) and Whiteley and Winyard (1987 p.86-7). Both show that groups with a good relationship with Whitehall still had open strategies which included Parliament, despite the fact that from 1966 to 1974 Parliament was dominated by strong governments and practically all successful legislation was government or government supported. Parliament was considered important as a way of drawing Ministers’ and MPs’ attention to the issue, as a way of gaining information and as a channel for directly influencing the government through its back-bench committee. For social policy groups like CPAG that relied on government action, drawing attention to the issue through the media and Parliament was a good way of forcing the government to act.

There are three main ways in which a pressure group can use and influence Parliament. Firstly there are the rights the group’s members have as citizens. Through them, it can conduct a letter writing campaign, encouraging members to write to their MP on the issue (Davies 1985 p.59, Grant 1995 p.67).¹⁸⁸ It can ask MPs to raise the problems of individual constituents. Of course it can arrange mass lobbies (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.94). At the time of elections, pressure groups can try to secure the support of prospective candidates (Davies 1985 p.83). Secondly, a pressure group can use sympathetic MPs. This may be done in a formal way with a Parliamentary spokesperson, or more informally. MPs can use the procedures of the House to extract information and to emphasise an issue. This can be done through written and oral questions, adjournment debates, early day motions and back-bench speeches. Also by making amendments to legislation, especially at committee stage (Grant 1995 p.67-9,

¹⁸⁸ These letters should not be standardised. Mrs. Whitehouse was careful in persuading her supporters to

Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.94). More unusually an MP can introduce a private member's bill, although these cannot promote income maintenance issues (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.94) and rarely become law (Grant 1995 p.68, Davies 1985 p.58). Negatively, MPs can filibuster to prevent unhelpful legislation (Davies 1985 p.61). Thirdly, a group can make links with groups in the House of Commons such as specialist back-bench groups of MPs, particularly those on the government side. These were in the 1970s stronger on the Conservative side (Grant 1995 p.73).

7.2.1 From the Outside

A group as small as the CPAG could never realistically organise a mass lobby of Parliament. However, CPAG did attempt to make family allowances an election issue in 1970. The back page of CPAG's election "poverty manifesto" gave potential MPs the opportunity to pledge support for this poverty programme which included increased and annually reviewed family allowances as well as help for the disabled, SB claimants and low paid (CPAG 1970 p.8, PTA). CPAG received eighty pledges from candidates from all three main parties, seventy percent of them supporting an increase in family allowances. Therefore CPAG was targeting MPs at their most vulnerable: election time. A press release was then issued. However it was not used by the mainstream press in the following days although it was reported in *New Society*.¹⁸⁹ This reduced its effectiveness. Hence this strategy was not repeated during the 1974 election.

7.2.2 From the Inside: Sympathetic MPs

CPAG used MPs to place questions in the House of Commons for two reasons: to simply gather information and to draw attention to issues in the House (Lynes and Field interviews). In the early 1970s, CPAG had forty-six supporters in the House of Commons and a number in the House of Lords. However as Appendix H.2.1 illustrates, only about a third of these were active asking questions for CPAG at that time. From the time that CPAG had a full time secretary/director (August 1 1966) to the fall of the Conservative government (February 28 1974), seventy-two MPs asked at least five questions (written or oral) relating to issues which

write in their own style to their MP (Davies 1985 p.59).

were important to CPAG¹⁹⁰. Questions had been asked on these topics before CPAG was formed.¹⁹¹

Oral questions and written questions had different aims. Whereas oral questions were designed to force the issue to the attention of Ministers and Parliament, written questions were aimed at obtaining information. The number of questions asked was similar during the Labour government under both Lynes and Field. There were almost twice as many questions asked during the Conservative government (see appendix H.2.2.1.). The main difference was that whilst under Lynes, CPAG asked twice as many oral CPAG issue questions as written, during the Conservative government there were four times as many written (see appendices H.2.2.2 and H.2.2.3). There were three reasons why this should happen.

Firstly as the issues became more publicised through CPAG's work and political interest in the issues of family poverty, it was to be expected that the number of questions would rise.¹⁹² As Parliamentary question times are fixed, then the number of oral questions could not increase by very much and it was logical that more questions would have to be written. Secondly, as CPAG expanded and undertook more research its thirst for official data grew, thus the need for detailed written questions and detailed written answers. Thirdly, after 1970 CPAG was awarded a new potent weapon in the House of Commons: Michael Meacher. Meacher asked two hundred and ten questions during the Conservative government or a quarter of the questions relating to CPAG issues asked during that period. Although, Meacher did ask oral questions, to publicise issues in the

¹⁸⁹ A Journal devoted to social policy issues (see chapter 8.2)

¹⁹⁰ These were: Family Allowances, Child Tax Allowances when the question or comment was obviously in favour of their reduction or abolition in order to improve family allowances. Family and Child Poverty and any report or survey related to that (such as *Circumstances of Families*). Then questions which could have been related to (although they may have just be inspired by or have been of interest personally to the politician concerned) CPAG campaigns: the wage stop, the four week rule, the holiday rule, the six week rule (which prevented the voluntarily unemployed from receiving benefits), the minimum wage and low wages, the cohabitation rule, Treatment of claimants in social security offices, problems of fatherless families, heating grants (this was a CPAG campaign although it centred mainly on the elderly).

¹⁹¹ The issues raised had been important to MPs before Lynes headed CPAG and twenty eight MPs asked at least one question about such issues between 1 January 1965 and 31 July 1966

¹⁹² The effect of CPAG is impossible to disentangle from other factors such as government action. E.g. during 1967, there were three times as many questions but this was partially because CPAG was more established and partially because of the government's anti-poverty programme of that year and devaluation which provoked a number of spontaneous questions and attacks which are impossible to disentangle from CPAG questions.

House and force the Minister to justify policy, it was at gathering information that he was most adept. Nine tenths of his questions were written.

Between November 1966 and July 1967, David Owen (Labour) was willing to ask questions for CPAG. In this early period, the questions were designed to raise the profile of family poverty; hence all his questions were oral.¹⁹³ Lynes remembers Owen as being useful not only was he very much on the “side” of CPAG, but because he was also particularly good at taking advantage of Parliamentary procedure like adjournment debates (Lynes interview). Using Parliamentary procedure, Owen applied for an adjournment debate the week of Christmas 1966 to debate child poverty. He reprimanded the Labour government for allowing a third Christmas with no action to help low income families (Hansard vol.738 21.12.66 p.1446). Peter Archer (Labour), Mervyn Pike (Conservative Shadow Social Security) and Norman Pentland (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Security) spoke in the debate (Hansard vol. 738 21.12.66, p.1446-1460). Compared to most adjournment debates this was well-attended (Theakston 1987 p.135).¹⁹⁴ Owen’s interest in CPAG waned after July 1967.

However, there were other MPs willing to ask questions. Alf Morris initiated an adjournment debate in February 1968 on the stigmatising collection of school dinner money. As is normal with adjournment debates the Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Dennis Howell, answered it, (Hansard vol .759 p.607-614). Frank Field remembers that eleven MPs, of whom seven were Labour, two Conservative and two Liberal,¹⁹⁵ were willing to ask questions for him in Parliament. Seven of the MPs had also been asking questions relevant to CPAG during Lynes’ time at CPAG. Some branches also had good contact with their MPs. The Manchester branch, for example, were able to persuade one local MP, Alf Morris, to ask a series of questions in Parliament.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ See Hansard 21.11.66, 23.1.67, 6.4.67, 27.7.67)

¹⁹⁴ Theakston argues that adjournment debates are usually only a face to face discussion between the aggrieved MP and the under-secretary (Theakston 1987 p.135)

¹⁹⁵ Frank Allaun (L), Alf Morris (L), Dame Joan Vickers (C), John Pardoe (Lib), Dame Irene Ward (C) and Jack Ashley (L), Ken Marks (L), Joan Lestor (L), David Steel (Lib), Neil Kinnock (L) and Dennis Skinner (L). the last two never entered Parliament until 1970. Lestor had held a junior minister post under the Labour government which explains her lack of questions. Steel’s interest developed in 1970.

¹⁹⁶ Of seven questions, one was asked orally, two may have been re-worded and submitted as written questions and four were not asked at all (questions from DBP).

Meacher organised an early day motion and got fifty Labour MPs' signatures (Hansard vol.806 p.281). The strategy of tabling an adjournment debate, started under Lynes, continued under Field. There were two adjournment debates in May and July 1972 initiated by Clinton Davies (Labour) and William Barnes (Labour), an active member of CPAG.¹⁹⁷ Both used CPAG evidence at their core (Hansard vol. 837 p.1885-1900, vol.840 p.2166-2174). Clinton Davies drew attention to the practices of special investigators and their handling of cohabitation (a prominent CPAG campaign which had been reported in the press that month) (Times 10.5.72 and Guardian 9.5.72). Barnes drew attention to the problems of people on the wage stop. However these debates failed to gain attention in the House of Commons similar to that of the Owen debate. Like the Morris debate only the Parliamentary Secretary responded and no other MPs contributed. It is likely that few MPs were in the chamber. Thus if adjournment debates were designed to attract MPs attention to the problems around poverty, then they were of limited use. Oral questions to the Prime Minister or Secretary of State in a packed House of Commons with reports in *The Times* were more effective in drawing attention to the issues and forcing Cabinet Ministers to respond.

MPs have two main reasons for showing an interest in a subject, genuine concern and opportunism (Robinson 1992 p.142). Certainly there is evidence of both behaviours in the questions and comments made by MPs. Owen and another Labour MP (Peter Archer) were willing to attack the family allowance up-rating in 1967 as inadequate (Hansard vol. 753 p.1095 and 1103). Three years later, Sir Brandon Rhys Williams (Conservative) and Dame Joan Vickers (Conservative) attacked FIS, calling instead for claw-back (Hansard vol.806 p.278, vol. 807 1229, 1232).

Both parties exploited the problem of family poverty whilst in Opposition with long Opposition sponsored debates in 1967 and 1972 (Hansard vol. 745 p.823-936 and 845 p.639-748). The CPAG campaign against the Labour government in 1970 was seized upon by Conservative front-benchers keen to embarrass the government. During the FIS debate, Labour front-bench spokespeople such as Shirley Williams criticised the bill strongly and was briefed by CPAG (2.11.70.

¹⁹⁷ Field cannot remember initiating any adjournment debates (Field 1970). However it is highly likely that CPAG was aware of these debates given the extensive use of CPAG material.

file 4, box 65, PTA). During the Conservative government, Callaghan, who had tried to thwart the 1967 up-rating, became a member of CPAG. For a number of genuinely concerned MPs it was not possible to be critical because once their party was in power they were junior members of the government.¹⁹⁸ However, as Robinson argues, there is little value in spending time analysing motives. Those with opportunist interests can still be harnessed by the cause (Robinson 1992 p.142). It was to CPAG's benefit if the government (whatever party was in power) was forced to justify its poverty policies. It also gave MPs sympathetic to CPAG a chance to debate the issue.

Both Lynes and Field realised that CPAG had to be a non-partisan group, thus both wooed MPs from all the political parties. Some prominent Conservatives actively supported CPAG. However of those asking at least five questions on CPAG issues, three quarters were Labour MPs. The proportion of each was slightly higher whilst their party was in opposition. Although the number of Liberals in Parliament was very small, both John Pardoe and David Steele were particularly vocal on CPAG's behalf. Thus throughout the period, although CPAG did have support from all parties, its greatest advocates were Labour MPs. However, as CPAG was equally as diligent about informing Conservatives, worked through their back-bench committees (see below) and did have some prominent Conservatives as members, this imbalance in its Parliamentary advocates did not damage its non-partisan reputation.

There were three more options open to CPAG in Parliament: the private member's bill, amending legislation and filibustering. CPAG did attempt to use the first. Townsend asked Alf Morris to insert in his private member's bill for the disabled a clause, which gave a special extra family allowance to disabled children. This Morris accepted. However the bill itself was unsuccessful (Townsend to Morris 6.2.70, PTA). This was not surprising given that private members' bills, especially when they increased public expenditure, are rarely successful. However in this case few CPAG resources were expended and the inclusion of such a clause appears to have been opportunist. Townsend heard about the proposed bill and

¹⁹⁸ Seven Conservatives stopped asking questions after 1970, however five of them had entered government. In contrast eleven Labour MPs were asking far more questions, two of whom had just left government.

saw an opportunity to help a sub-group of children. CPAG never pinned any hopes on this strategy.

The government's decision to reverse the *Simper* case success in the High court (chapter see 5.2.1) in April 1973 was met by intensive CPAG lobbying of MPs and the Lords (*New Law Journal* 14.3.74 p.237). CPAG was successful in persuading the Lords to introduce a generous clause, but this was overturned. CPAG used the Lords because there was no hope of an amendment being made in the Commons where the Conservative majority were obliged to vote against such an amendment. The government overturned the amendment in the Commons. However CPAG did succeed to a degree, the controversy over the clause caused by the Lords' amendment meant that the government exempted diet and heating allowances from being aggregated. These allowances were largely given to the elderly and disabled, the "deserving" poor (*New Law Journal* 14.3.74 p.237). Thus amendments could only be made to government legislation if the government was embarrassed into not overturning them completely.

Arranging for MPs to filibuster legislation that was contrary to CPAG's goals was not possible. It is only effective when the legislation is a private member's bill and can run out of time. However an important piece of government legislation is given what time it needs to become law. All the legislation, which was contrary to CPAG goals, was government sponsored and thus impossible to stop. To have tried would have merely created bitterness between the government and CPAG.

7.2.3 Forming Links with the Back Bench Committees

Back-bench committees are not official committees of Parliament. They are groups of MPs discussing their own party's policy (Grant 1995 p.73). The back-bench committees of the party in power are most useful to a pressure group because the government expects to be attacked by the opposition but is always concerned about attacks from its own MPs. In addition, the committees have a direct line to the appropriate Minister (Davies 1985 p.59). Back-bench committees were particularly significant for the Conservative Party, where they traditionally were stronger (Grant 1995 p.73). The various committees, including the committee for Health and Social Security (HSSC), were chaired by the relevant

shadow spokesperson whilst in Opposition and by a back-bencher whilst in power (Field 1982 p.57). They were useful channels of Parliamentary Party opinion to the government. HSSC was chaired from 1970 by Mervyn Pike, a former junior minister, Opposition Spokesperson for Social Security and member since 1967 of CPAG. The Honorary Secretary was Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, a member of CPAG and a tireless advocate of child benefits (see appendix H.2.2.4). Therefore, CPAG was incredibly lucky that not only had the chair experience of how government worked and knowledge of social security, but the honorary secretary was a strong supporter of their main policy.

However the back-bench committees being an important channel to government, they were in the 1970s an untapped target for pressure group activity (Field interview). They were not even mentioned until recently in academic studies of Parliament.¹⁹⁹ It was Field that started to use the HSSC of the Conservative Party whilst he was director of CPAG. He recognised that not only were they a way of shaping Conservative policy but more importantly a channel of information and opinions to the government (Field interview). CPAG had good access to the HSSC. Firstly because the HSSC was hungry for information on social policy so that it could formulate its policies independently of the government. Secondly, the barriers to entry were low and groups welcomed because of the lack of interest from other groups. Thirdly, Rhys Williams was honorary secretary and invited Lynes and Field to at least one meeting of HSSC (Rhys Williams to Field 29.10.70 box 69, PTA). Given that no minutes of the meetings have survived it is impossible to judge how much influence CPAG was able to exert through the HSSC.

Lynes had not used back-bench committees at all. He worked much more closely with individual MPs (Lynes interview). It is true that the Labour Party's back-bench committees were weak, however they might still have provided a useful channel to government. In addition, considering that the Conservative HSSC was being chaired by the Opposition Spokesperson and deputised by the future junior minister in DHSS (see appendix H.2.2.4), it was an opportunity lost. As Labour

¹⁹⁹ Davies 1985, Whiteley and Winyard 1987, Theakston 1987, Pym 1974 do not even mention back-bench committees.

developed stronger back-bench committees in the 1970s, Field exploited this avenue as well (Field 1982 p.57).

However, although the HSSC was a useful channel, it was the Chancellor and Treasury that held the purse-strings and controlled taxation policy (necessary for claw-back). Field argues that with hindsight, he should have concentrated more on the Treasury back-bench committee (Field 1982 p.57). This may have been more difficult to influence, but it too was ignored by pressure groups in the early 1970s and would therefore have been amenable to at least talking to CPAG. Thus it appears this too was an opportunity lost. It was a case of a pressure group concentrating on its own Parliamentary “policy group” and missing the importance of the wider government structures.

7.3 How Useful a Vehicle were the Political Parties and Parliament?

CPAG’s success at conference varied with its ability to secure “big names” for its fringe meetings. Large fringe meetings did give an impression of CPAG as an important and influential pressure group, which CPAG was keen to cultivate. However the growing interest of conferences in the problems of family poverty were more linked to CPAG’s ability to conduct an effective media campaign about the problem. The 1973 attempt to use the labour conference to get CPAG policies onto the agenda was fairly successful and was innovative. However it could not guarantee the priority status of the issues.

Although, CPAG had an overlap in membership with the SPSC, its influence over NEC policy was restricted. Even when CPAG’s views were incorporated in one of the main policy proposal documents, the weakness of the SPSC meant that it did not become SPSC policy immediately. CPAG did manage to build up a good relationship with the CRUD, which was open to policy ideas. However its choice of Molly Meacher as its main liaison for the tax credit scheme was mistaken, given her left wing links.

CPAG was extremely effective in its use of Parliament generally. It used Parliamentary questions to both obtain accurate information and to force ministers to justify their policies. In addition, CPAG’s ability to put the problem of family

poverty back onto the agenda, meant that the Opposition exploited the problem to its and CPAG's advantage. Its use of back-bench committees could have been more effective but the fact that CPAG was the first pressure group to contact such groups illustrates its innovativeness as a group.

8. Chapter Eight: CPAG's Success in using the Media

In a democracy with a free media, one of the most important sources of influence is the media. Most people in the country had access to a television set or a radio. Many people read a newspaper. Views and opinions are formed from what a person reads. Thus the media was a key target for CPAG. However the media itself is a collective term for a wide range of broadcasting from soap operas to serious news programmes and from specialist and broadsheet press to easy-reading tabloids. The media can be national or local. What types of media did CPAG use? How did it use them? Why did it choose certain sections of the media? Which audiences did it seek to influence? Was it right to do so? How much success did it have in terms of exposure and good publicity for itself and its issues?

8.1 *How Pressure Groups Target the Media*

In order to answer the above questions it is important to understand the ways in which pressure groups use the media. Firstly, the media gives a group publicity and attracts new members. This *visibility* of the group can be due to the group commercially advertising in the press, the reporting of a relevant event or a documentary on an issue (Grant 1995 p.86). Secondly, pressure groups through the media can *influence* government by conducting a media campaign, which can oblige a minister to respond or persuade civil servants to give the matter some priority (Grant 1995 p.87). Thirdly, pressure groups can influence the *content* of the media's output by helping to write articles or produce television programmes (Grant 1995 p.88). Fourthly, when a story breaks the relevant pressure group may be asked to give a *reactive response* (Grant 1995 p.87). In addition, pressure groups might use the media for information (Grant 1995 p.87). Frank Field argues that this was the case for the CPAG. Field used the court page of the *Times* for listings of those invited to government receptions (Field 1982 p.54). It was obviously an important use of the media but one that is difficult to evaluate. Finally, the media is helpful in by creating the necessary *climate* to influence both decision-makers and public values (Grant 1995 p.87). This is impossible to quantify and evaluate and may be assumed indirectly if there is evidence of

visibility, influence, reactive response and content.

8.2 *What Media Did the CPAG Target and Why?*

8.2.1 Quality and Specialist Press

Selecting an audience was important to the CPAG. Throughout the period it concentrated its efforts on the broadsheet press and especially *The Times* and the *Guardian*. CPAG also wrote articles for and letters to partisan journals such as *The New Statesman*, *Tribune* and *Spectator*²⁰⁰ and contributed to the specialist professional press (Streather interview). CPAG members and staff wrote columns for social work journals (Bull and Weir interviews).

The reason why CPAG concentrated on the sections of the media was that they were directing their attention to political élites, civil servants and informed opinion. They wanted to influence “the papers that politicians read” (Streather interview). CPAG was “not trying to address the poor, [CPAG] w[as] trying to address the government, it [was] the government’s fault that they [were] poor...” (Veit Wilson interview). CPAG wanted to raise their visibility and the visibility of family poverty in such publications in the hope of influencing “those who made policy or who articulated their opinions to the government” (Veit Wilson interview). “In the beginning [CPAG] believed that if [they] could convince civil servants and ministers that a certain line of action was desirable, they could take the necessary measures”(Philp interview). Therefore a concentration on the broadsheet and specialist press was a logical course of action.

CPAG used the broadsheet and specialist press in two main ways. Firstly to simply raise the profile of the problem of family poverty, which would help fix the politicians’, civil servants’ and later trade union leaders’ attention on the problem. Secondly to *influence* the above through the content of press articles and also by conducting a campaign in the media. It was recognised by the CPAG that ministers, senior civil servants and trade union leaders get a lot of mail. Thus they might notice an article aimed at them in the press quicker than correspondence. CPAG identified that trade union leaders tended to read the *Guardian* and

200 *The New Statesman* is sympathetic to the Labour Party, *Tribune* is sympathetic to the left of the Labour Party and trades unionists. *The Spectator* is sympathetic to the Conservative Party

therefore strived to get relevant articles in that newspaper (Field 1982 p.54). In the case of politicians a media campaign was used in conjunction with correspondence to ensure that the politician read the mail, as s/he might be questioned about it in Parliament or publicly (Field 1982 p.54). All policy civil servants and Ministers would have been given a synopsis of all the relevant newspaper cuttings each day.

8.2.2 The Populist Media

It is possible to detect a shift in approach towards reaching a wider audience. As early as November 1968 Philp argued that “there [had] been no growth of public support for higher family allowances nor any general movement to press for improvements in the situation of families with low incomes.” In fact there had been the opposite effect and that “...Ministers [were] now afraid that they have already taken praiseworthy action to meet a social problem ...only to have it misunderstood and indeed opposed even by the mass of their own supporters.” Philp’s conclusion was that “CPAG needed to undertake a mass public relations campaign based on good research” (Philp memo 30.11.68, file 2 p.1-2, PTA)²⁰¹. Field reported in June 1972, that they had “needed to spread [their] net to cover the popular papers.” Richard Todd on the *Daily Mirror* (from 1973) was very interested in the work of the CPAG and gave good coverage to the CPAG. (Streather and Weir interviews). However, stimulating the interest of the more populist media was never as high a priority as maintaining and strengthening the interest of the “quality” press.

The key reason for the shift towards the populist press was not only to raise the visibility of CPAG generally but also to seek to influence “the ordinary person on the street”. There was also a need to try and balance the negative profiles of the poor being portrayed in the tabloids and to ensure that CPAG information could not be used in a negative way (Veit Wilson interview). However there was a third use of the tabloids and that was the use of them to gain information. The CRO used the *Daily Mirror* and the *News of the World* advice pages for cases and also discussed with the two papers what advice specials should be included in the

²⁰¹ Most of the other recommendations in this memo refer to the proposed merger with Shelter and indeed one of the reasons why Philp was in favour of the merger was Shelter’s expertise

papers. Therefore CRO gained cases and information from the newspapers and used the media to fulfil its secondary role of advice (Weir interview).

The CPAG was also successful in broadcasting. At a national level this started with programmes aimed at informed people such as documentaries²⁰². There was also main news coverage of the launch of *The Poor and The Poorest*.²⁰³ Later they were able to get good coverage on programmes such as *24 Hours* (Field 1970a p.11) and the popular early evening *Newsnight* (Weir interview). They also got coverage on radio political programmes. By the 1970s, however the shift towards the populist media had extended to broadcasting. The Jimmy Young show on Radio 2 was used not only to increase the group's visibility but also as a method of gaining material from the listeners (Field 1982 p.53). According to Jane Streather in the 1970s she was "constantly seven days a week" speaking on national and London radio stations (Streather interview). As with the tabloids, the rationale behind talking on these stations was to maintain a high level of visibility.

8.3 *The Success of Press Releases*

A particular study was undertaken in order to establish the CPAG's effectiveness with the national press at achieving what Grant terms visibility and influence. The study consisted of taking a large number of CPAG press releases²⁰⁴ and checking three newspapers to see if the story on the press release was reported nationally by newspapers. The newspapers selected were *The Times*, the *Guardian*, and *Sun*.²⁰⁵ The press releases covered the period from September 1966 (just after Tony Lynes became secretary) until the election of February 24 1974.

Although no similar study of a pressure group has been made to compare with this study, two studies of the media were made in 1975 and 1976. Both looked at the

202 In 1966 the CPAG was involved in working with its former part time secretary Gillian Holroyde on two programmes about poverty (secretary's report Essex archive).

203 Peter Townsend and Brian Abel-Smith were both interviewed by ITV and BBC carried the story (Minutes 27 January 1966, file 1, box 65, Essex)

204 The CPAG press releases used were those collected from the Peter Townsend Archive at the University of Essex and those from Professor John Veit Wilson's private collection. The collection is most probably not complete, but it is impossible to estimate either the completeness or representativeness of the press releases.

205 *The Times* was at this time, a centralist to centre right broadsheet read by a number of people in power. *The Guardian* a centre-left broadsheet read by many in academia, trade unions and the Labour Party. *Sun* was a centre tabloid. *Sun* was chosen because it was like *The Mirror* on the extreme populist wing of the newspaper spectrum. *The Sun* was selected because according to a CPAG document "both *Sun* and *The Mail*, particularly the former, now give the group good coverage. And *The Mirror* is at last becoming more

most of the national press and broadcasts for their respective years (Golding and Middleton 1982²⁰⁶ and McQuail 1977). They are both helpful for placing the whole issue of welfare within the media framework. Golding and Middleton conclude that “welfare is not big news”²⁰⁷ and this was supported by McQuail who showed that in 1975 social policy news made up only 3-4% of the news (McQuail 1977p.217). On average social security and welfare stories made up roughly a third of all social policy stories (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.68).

A second major finding to emerge from the study by Golding and Middleton was that unemployment benefit and social security abuses were the two most prominent stories (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.69). However the earlier study by McQuail found very different results for 1975 (McQuail 1977 p.235-7). This may partly be due to the different methods that the two studies used and partly due to the fact that scrounger-phobia was aggravated by the 1976 Deevy case. However both studies show that stories about social security, Family Income Supplement (FIS) and Family Allowances were scarce (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.70, McQuail 1977 p.222). A third finding was that the papers varied a great deal in their coverage. Whilst most of the stories about CPAG were in *The Times*, the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror*, over half *Sun's* stories about social security and welfare were on its abuse (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.71 and 73). McQuail argues that much of the difference in coverage between the broadsheets and the tabloids is due to space (McQuail 1977 p.223). However his research also suggests that newspapers obtained their information from very different sources. *The Guardian* relied on pressure groups for 10.4% of its sources of information, *The Morning Star* for 20.4%, and *Sun* 8.2%. *The Times* relied far more on government reports²⁰⁸ (McQuail 1977 p.232).

It can be expected therefore that news specifically about the CPAG and its particular campaigns would make up a very small percentage of the stories. After

interested” (Frank Field June 1972 Future CPAG Policy and Strategy: A Rejoinder Part Two p.11, CPAG, PTA).

206 This study included all the national newspapers except the *Morning Star* and *The Financial Times*, as well as the main *BBC* and *ITN* news broadcasts. It also studied the following local media: *The Leicester Mercury*, *Sunderland Echo* and *BBC Radio Leicester*, *BBC Radio Newcastle* and *Radio Metro*

207 1976 was no normal year in the reporting of social security news. It was “the year of cuts” and scrounger-phobia sparked off by the Deevy case (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.59 and 61).

208 It should be noted that *Sun* also relied heavily on government reports with them totalling 19.7% of their sources (McQuail 1977 p.232).

all in 1976 it was found that it made up less than 5% of social security and welfare stories. This made it “top of the pressure group league.” (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.71) However many of these stories may have been in depth articles commissioned by the newspaper and responses to stories that were breaking. Therefore these stories would not be covered by this study of the CPAG’s press releases and the response to these by the national newspapers.

The actual results of the study were that out of 130 press releases, 22 (or 17%) resulted in stories in *The Times*, 26 (or 20%) in *The Guardian* and 5 (or 4%) in the *Sun*. The immediate conclusion is that there was a huge difference in coverage between the broadsheets studied and *Sun*. A similar study of *Daily Mirror* from July 1972 supports the view that the tabloids were less interested.²⁰⁹ Another conclusion that can be drawn is that the large majority of press releases were not successful. Only a fifth of press releases made it to the pages of *The Guardian* and a sixth to *The Times*.

Golding and Middleton argue that welfare is only news when it obtrudes into other news areas such as crime, sex and politics (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.68). The press releases issued by the CPAG were grouped by topic (see appendix I) In many topic areas there simply were not enough press releases to make reliable conclusions. However the group was successful in getting their core policies into the press.²¹⁰ The largest category of press releases dealt with the issues around poverty,²¹¹ of these just over a third made it to the papers. However most of these stories were in the broadsheets and not the tabloids.

The Group was also successful in getting its stories about cohabitation in the press. The first press release on the issue on May 9 1972, was taken up by both the *Guardian* and *The Times*, but not by the tabloid press. However *Sun* followed up the next two press releases of December 17 1971 and July 11 1973. *Sun*’s interest

²⁰⁹ This date was chosen because Frank Field in his memo of June 1972 argued that *The Mirror* had only just become interested. It is in the later period that one might expect more coverage from *The Mirror*. *The Mirror* in the twenty months covered actually had more stories than *Sun* in the full period of ninety months. However *Sun* did not cover a press release until December 1971, suggesting that tabloid coverage was slower to obtain for press releases (except from the Christmas 1965 release of *The Poor and the Poorest* which obtained coverage from a cross section of the media).

²¹⁰ Stories about poverty (poverty, family allowances, FIS, means testing and other benefits but not those related to housing)

²¹¹ This category includes poverty, family allowances, Family Income Supplements, other benefits (except housing benefits such as rate and rent rebates) and means testing.

in the CPAG's press releases can partly be explained by *The Sun's* and *Daily Mirror's* independent interest in a topic, which combined sex and politics. The housing issue gained no interest from *Sun* or *Daily Mirror* but a third of all stories reached the broadsheet press. The fact that CPAG was fairly successful in getting attention for its stories about its relationship with the government is understandable because the people involved were well-known figures, who featured in the press anyway (Golding and Middleton 1982 p.70). The issue of children being deprived of school meals during the school holidays is one issue where the tabloids showed more interest than the broadsheets. The story was ignored twice by *Sun* and *Daily Mirror* and finally made it to the front page of *Sun* on August 1 1973.²¹² Some of this late success could be due to timing. The previous two releases had been at the beginning of the summer holidays and in the Christmas holidays. The successful one came half way through the school holidays when there may have been more general sympathy for the problems of parents having to feed hungry children. All the press release about the problems of poverty in Northern Ireland and the draconian measures taken there failed to reach the press. This is not surprising as Northern Ireland was featuring heavily in the papers because of its political and paramilitary problems; the welfare situation simply could not compete.

8.3.1 The Times' and New Society's Coverage of CPAG and Family Poverty

However this study only investigated the effectiveness of CPAG's press releases. It is safe to assume that the CPAG also found its way into the national press through responses to stories that were breaking and influenced the content by writing articles for the press and writing letters. A survey was made of *The Times* index,²¹³ using the three index headings "Child Poverty Action Group", "Family Allowances" and "Poverty".²¹⁴ It was found that under these three headings were

²¹² The Mirror also covered it on this date.

²¹³ *The Times* is the only national paper to be indexed by subject and therefore lends itself very well to this kind of survey

²¹⁴ Of course other headings such as rebates, "Family Income Supplement" and even members names such as "Peter Townsend" or "Tony Lynes" would also have been possibilities but it was felt that "Child Poverty Action Group", "Family Allowances" and "Poverty" would alone give a reasonable indication of the bulk of *The Times* coverage on the CPAG and its core interests. If the topic mentioned under poverty was obviously irrelevant (e.g. about world poverty) or about another pressure group it was ignored. The other stories about poverty however were retained and therefore this may overestimate the number of articles, stories and leading articles about family poverty. When a story featured under more than one of these headings, it was classified first as a "Child Poverty Action Group" story, over the other two categories. In a situation when it

two hundred and twenty two stories, articles, editorials, letters or Parliamentary questions, just under a third of these were under the heading “Child Poverty Action Group.” Given that the *Guardian* gained more of its stories from pressure groups and responded to more of CPAG’s press releases it is highly probable that if a similar study was made of *The Guardian*, the number of stories would be higher.

New Society was a weekly journal devoted to the field of social policy. During the period there were twenty-two articles about CPAG and a hundred and eleven articles about CPAG’s main areas of interest.²¹⁵ Key CPAG staff and members wrote sixty-nine articles and letters which were published by the journal. As *New Society* was only weekly and its articles tended to be long and in depth, CPAG was gaining a great deal of coverage, particularly at sensitive times. During the 1967 uprating debates and the 1970 election campaign CPAG had a high profile in the journal. However, generally after *The Poor and The Poorest* was published and CPAG was established, its presence in and contribution to *New Society* was guaranteed. The profile of poverty was given a boost when Lynes became a fairly regular writer for the journal after his departure for CPAG.

8.4 *Public Opinion*

Public opinion is notoriously difficult to measure. However what the government perceives to be the public mood influences its policies. Public opinion can be measured at two levels: opinion and attitude. The former is the more superficial. It may reflect deep held attitudes but is likely to be a spontaneous reaction to a particular event. The latter, however are deeply held perceptions, which structure the response to particular events. They change only slowly or in extreme circumstances (Grant 1995 p.143). Although pressure groups may engineer events to sway opinion, Rose (1974 p.254-5) argues that a pressure group will be most effective if it conforms to the cultural norms of society (i.e. the majority’s attitudes).

was not a “Child Poverty Action Group” story but featured under both “Family Allowances” and “Poverty”, it was classified as a poverty story.

²¹⁵ These were family poverty, family allowances, tax credits and the wage stop. These headings encompassed most of CPAG’s main areas of interest. The key staff and members were EC members and staff members

During the period in question, the issue of child poverty had a fluctuating support from cultural norms but there was at the same time a gradual shift towards an acceptance that child poverty was a serious problem. Family allowances had been since the 1950s the most unpopular social benefit. In 1953 only 23% of those questioned wanted more spent on family allowances, 43% wanted less (Gallup 1976 p.295). Only defence was less popular. However the hostility towards family allowances did lessen throughout the 1970s. In 1967, the claw-back proposals were opposed by nearly half of all respondents, only twenty nine per cent were in favour (Gallup 1976 p.924). However by 1974, half of respondents agree with a rise in family allowances and only a third were against (Gallup 1976 p.1379). Views towards the poor could fluctuate considerably. In 1964 more people attributed poverty to circumstances rather than individual fault. In 1968, after devaluation when the economy was struggling, more people blamed the individual. By 1970 the pendulum had swung back (Gallup 1976 p.740, 1014, 1117).

However the main problem with CPAG's strategy was that tax allowances were always more popular than benefits with the average tax-payer. Although 61% of people questioned in April 1967 about claw-back thought that it would make no difference overall, over half of all respondents disagreed with the idea (Gallup 1976 p.924). There was hostility on the part of tax-paying men in particular to the idea that their take home pay would decrease and their wives' family allowances would increase. The fact that this hostility had lessened by 1974 is demonstrative of the underlying shift. This shift cannot be just attributed to CPAG, however CPAG's campaigns may have been a contributing factor.

8.5 CPAG Branches' Use of the Local Media

The establishing of branches, led CPAG to the target of a different type of media. Local media is already aimed at a restricted audience. It has to take on the roles of both the broadsheet and the populist media. Therefore the branches were targeting and influencing a broader audience before the national organisation had much success with the national popular media.

Branch interviewees remember being on balance successful in their use of the media (Bull and Bradshaw interviews). The professionalism of some branches impressed the local newspapers and broadcasters and gave the impression that they were bigger and more important than they actually were (Bradshaw interview). Although Manchester had limited success with the biggest newspaper in Manchester, the *Manchester Evening News*, it was far more successful with the smaller papers such as the *Wythenshawe Express* (Bull interview, Manchester CPAG 1968 Annual report p.4). It also got coverage from the more specialist *Manchester Social Welfare News*.²¹⁶ Manchester had an excellent relationship with BBC North West, a good relationship with Granada and with North West Radio (Bull interviews).²¹⁷ York also gained good coverage from their local news programme Calendar North (Bradshaw interview), Bristol from the local ITV station (HTV), although the relationship with the local BBC station was poorer. Bristol also gained good coverage from the local newspapers: the *Evening Post* and the *Western Daily Press* (Bull₂ interview). Other branches gained some media coverage.²¹⁸

Another job of the local CPAG's was to correct any misrepresentations of both the poor and claimants in the local press. As the press became better informed of the problems of low income families, one hope was that scroungerphobia would not gain a strong following among the editors. However members of CPAG would look out for unsympathetic articles in the local press and correct them with readers' letters.²¹⁹

The media needed to satisfy its audience's taste for sensationalism. Bristol CPAG put as much effort into publicising the need for much larger family allowances as it did in promoting its report of school uniform grants (Bristol CPAG minutes 10.10.72, DBP). However whereas the media showed little interest in the former, the latter received enormous attention (see chapter 4.4.3). Therefore the media did

²¹⁶ E.g. vol 10, no.2 Summer 1968; vol. 10, number 3, Autumn 1968; vol 11, no.3 Autumn 1969.

²¹⁷ It is mentioned in the 1968 Annual report of Manchester CPAG that the most ambitious projects had been undertaken by the local BBC (p.4). The large amount collected in fees by Manchester branch is also proof of its success with the media. In 1968 the branch collected £65 in fees (Manchester CPAG 1968 Annual report p.12).

²¹⁸ Merseyside gained good coverage for its Welfare Rights Projects and generally (MCPAG Annual report 1968-9 p.4&6). The newsletters of other branches suggest that they too were gaining coverage (Cambridge PAG newsletter no.1) (Wandsworth PAG/Wandsworth People's Rights no.2, no.10, no.18)

²¹⁹ One such example is that of a member of the Manchester CPAG responding to a scroungerphobic article in the *Ashton Under Lyme Reporter* (2.8.68, David Bull's Private Papers)

give a skewed impression of CPAG's activities locally. This added to an impression that CPAG was interested in welfare rights and improving take up, rather than lobbying to reform the system in favour of universalism.

The main problem for the CPAG in its relationship with the local media, was the problem that it had with reaching the provinces generally. Only a few branches were active and effective at doing their job and many areas of the country had no effective branch. Therefore, whereas local CPAG's were able to raise the profile of the organisation in some areas, the picture nationally was patchy.

8.6 How Effective was CPAG in using the Media and Influencing Public Opinion?

CPAG was on balance extremely effective at using the media to get its message across to the political élite. It was able to get its stories and coverage by the specialist and broadsheet press, particularly *The Guardian*. However, CPAG was never as effective at getting coverage by the tabloid press. This was partially because the tabloid press was less interested in "serious" news but also because CPAG saw influencing the political élites as its main role.

However, there was always a risk with this strategy that the political élites would be persuaded but would be unable to carry their grass roots members (and in the case of the government, the electorate) with them. The hostility of key Labour voters to claw-back was just one of example of the government accepting CPAG's argument but its grass roots not understanding or accepting the argument. However, by 1974 CPAG had made some progress with the populist media and there was a shift amongst the electorate to favouring higher family allowances even if this meant changes to the child tax allowances. *The Poor and the Poorest* and the *Poor get Poorer under Labour* were two campaigns, which were successful in all sections of the media. It was media campaigns like these and the more general campaigning, which gave it such a high profile in Parliament, in Whitehall, at political conferences and trade unions congresses.

9 Chapter Nine: Trade Unions and Other Pressure Groups

This chapter focuses on the relationship CPAG had with other pressure groups. The first section concentrates on the relationship with the trade union movement. The next section discusses CPAG's relationship with other pressure groups, that is other small promotional pressure groups and more radical representational groups. The fundamental questions being asked about both these organisations are: firstly why did the CPAG want to develop a relationship with it, what was it hoping to achieve? Secondly, how successful was the CPAG in developing a relationship with the organisation?

9.1 *The Trade Unions*

Trade Unions operate both individually as separate unions and collectively as the Trade Union Congress (TUC) which has the General Council (GC) at its pinnacle. The GC is advised by a number of policy committees which send their own representatives to meet ministers. The trade union movement operates on not only a national level but also a local level with trade councils in most towns and also local branches of individual trade unions. The TUC was potentially of great importance to small pressure groups like CPAG. It was one of the two big producer groups and had easy access to ministers. It was one of the few groups that was able to join more than one policy community, having influence in the economic and social ministries. Its special relationship with the Labour Party also made it a valuable ally.

This section will concentrate on the attempts to build a relationship with the TUC's GC, although there will be references to sympathetic trade unions. The first section will concentrate on the CPAG's national office's relationship with the national trade union movement. The second section will comment on the relationship between CPAG's local branches and the local trade union movement (full chronological details can be found in appendix J.1) .

9.1.1 **The CPAG's Attempts to Liaise with the Trade Union Movement at a National Level**

The CPAG's relationship with the trade unions has been analysed by McCarthy in

both his thesis (1981) and subsequent book (1986). Using the theories of Perlmann and Richter he argues that unions will only become interested in politics beyond the market place when they are under threat (McCarthy 1986 p.171-3). Despite *In Place of Strife*,²²⁰ the unions were essentially not under threat from the Labour government because of the close relationship between the unions and the Labour Party (McCarthy 1986 p.175). He argues that despite sporadic attempts by the CPAG, it was mostly unsuccessful at establishing links with the trade union movement. However, it was not only the lack of interest from the unions that was to blame. CPAG's own attempts were sporadic and half-hearted for the most part (see below). McCarthy has offered three reasons for this.

Firstly, CPAG as a small organisation had limited resources and thus could have little influence over the unions. Secondly, Tony Lynes' personal style and the group's early faith in ministerial links meant that the available resources were not channelled into contacts with the unions. Thirdly, lack of natural contacts with the unions meant that working with them was not easy. Resources channelled into making contact with the unions would not see a pay-off for a longer period of time in comparison to the resources being spent on the media or Parliament (McCarthy 1986 p.178-80). McCarthy argues that the later increase in the group's financial and staff resources and the different style of Field meant that a relationship between CPAG and the unions, although never as close as with other institutions, did develop. It is the aim of this section to evaluate McCarthy's thesis by asking two questions. Is it true that CPAG was only marginally effective in building contact with the unions under Lynes? Was there a real improvement under Field?

9.1.1.1 Under Tony Lynes' Tenure

At the same time as CPAG was formed the Social Insurance and Industrial Welfare Committee (SIIWC) of the TUC's GC was pressuring the government on the problem of family poverty. As early as October 1965, it was agreed that representations should be made to the Minister for higher family allowances and an inquiry into the wage stop (SIIWC 13.10.65, TUCA). The following July this was followed up with a memorandum to the Minister that advocated higher family allowances to ensure that workers with children were able to benefit from earnings

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related benefits (SIIWC 13.7.66 TUCA).²²¹ After a meeting with Houghton in March 1967, when it was hinted that the government might be looking for a means tested solution to family poverty, the SIIWC moved towards a claw-back scheme. This scheme would give the second child eighteen shillings and the third and subsequent twenty shillings (SIIWC 9.3.67 TUCA). Papers on the topic of claw-back were circulated at the SIIWC's July meeting (SIIWC 12.7.67 TUCA) and the seven shilling increase of that year was criticised for being too small (SIIWC 11.10.67 TUCA). The SIIWC continued to pressure the government on the issue of family poverty throughout 1968 and 1969, despite the Chancellor's arguments that higher family allowances through claw-back would increase the tax pressure on families (SIIWC 10.1.68, 10.4.68, 14.5.69 TUCA).

Despite this considerable amount of interest on the part of the SIIWC, there was very little contact between the TUC and CPAG. Until 1967, there was nothing but half-hearted talk about links with the TUC on the part of CPAG. Trade unions were included on the list of target organisations in July 1965 (EC minutes 17.7.65, file 1, box 65 PTA) but there was no real contact. In June 1967, a trade union sub-committee came to nothing (Secretary's report June 1967, file 1, box 65, PTA). A request for TUC funding was unsuccessful (12.7.67, TUCA). As an after-thought a leaflet, written for social workers explaining the wage stop, was sent to trade unions branches as part of the 1967 campaign. The greatest success of this leaflet was to introduce CPAG to a number of local trade councils for the first time.²²²

It was in the summer of 1967 that CPAG made the first break through with the trade unions. Frank Cousins, a former Secretary General of the TUC and Labour Cabinet Minister, wrote for *Poverty* arguing that CPAG and the TUC had complementary roles and that family allowances had a role to play in adjusting wages to family size (Cousins 1967 p.6). However this success was not followed up and the TUC declined an invitation to the Family Allowances Conference (EC minutes 13.9.68, file 2, box 65, PTA). The hope of winning a contract for research

²²¹ This refers to the fact that there was a ceiling of 85% of net earnings on earnings related benefits. This meant low wage earners with a number of children could not be given the earnings related addition, although they had contributed for it, as their benefits would then be higher than their normal wages.

²²² Gloucestershire Trade Council wrote to the General Secretary of the TUC asking if he could "comment and advise [as to] who are the Child Poverty Action Group" (5.11.67 TUCA)

from the National Union of Miners came to nothing (EC minutes 4.10.68, file 2, box 65, PTA).

The lack of contact with the trade unions sparked concern from Iain Jordan of SPAG. He developed in spring 1968 an action plan to encourage better links. He advocated: a leaflet for trade unionists explaining CPAG's common aims; a memo for all branches on how to persuade their local trade council to affiliate with them and inviting trade councils directly to meetings with CPAG nationally (EC minutes 24.5.68, file2, box 65, PTA). Only the second was ever implemented by the EC when they asked the Appeals Committee (AC) (which had been set up to raise funds) to encourage branches to get trade councils to affiliate. This directive was ignored and the AC continued to concentrate on social work groups with which it had enjoyed success in the past (AC minutes 29.7.68, file 2 box 65, PTA). It took until February 1969 before it finally suggested that branches encourage trade unions to affiliate (AC minutes 20.2.69, file 3, box 65, PTA). Even if the AC had encouraged local branches, the spread would have been sporadic across the country and there would have been problems of contact for the same reasons as for national CPAG (see below). The first and third options were not followed up largely for reasons for expense and time. When Iain Jordan left the EC shortly afterwards, any commitment to form real links with the trade union movement also left the EC.

Thus the period 1965 to early 1969 was flavoured by a distinct lack of interest from both the TUC and the CPAG in each other. Only Jordan tried to form some links but he was very much a single voice with few practical, effective ideas on how to bridge the gap. At one level, it looks as if McCarthy was wrong about the TUC lack of interest in family poverty. Family poverty and family allowances were discussed fairly regularly by the SIIWC and similar ideas about claw-back were developed by 1969. However the SIIWC was only one committee of the GC and thus only one committee with which ministers spoke. It was also in not a very powerful position regarding family allowances. There was no demand for better family allowances from the rank and file. In fact, the issue was not discussed at congress at all except in reports from the GC (Report of the Trade Union Congress 1965-1969). Thus, the only support that SIIWC had for their plans was their

research not the demands of actual unions. The government was easily able to point to the tax implications of claw-back. Whereas all trade unionists hoped to become pensioners and therefore felt strongly about the value of pensions, only a minority had dependent families. Trade unions had historically been ambivalent to family allowances (Land 1975 p.186). Thus the real issues for congress and for the individual unions remained union rights, pay and pensions.

There were two possible reasons why CPAG did not form good links with the trade union movement before 1969. Firstly, they did not see the GC *per se* as that important an institution in gaining higher family allowances. CPAG knew that SIIWC was pressuring the government quite independently but achieving very little. Without any mandate from the Congress itself the GC was unable to exert its full influence on ministers. It was reduced to presenting arguments as to why higher family allowances were desirable in the same way as CPAG, although with more status. If the GC was to have strength in its negotiations with government then CPAG needed to persuade the Congress of the need for higher family allowances to combat the problem of family poverty. The second main problem was that most of CPAG's EC came from a social work or increasingly an academic background. There were few good contacts with the trade unions (Philp interview). The trade union movement's view was that it had been established a century earlier to combat poverty and deliver a decent standard of living to all workers. It did not need to work with a pressure group to continue this goal. Although there was an increasing acceptance within the GC that higher family allowances were necessary, for most trade unionists the main issue was higher wages.

CPAG's focus being a relatively low profile insider group (although still using the media and Parliament) meant that it concentrated its efforts on the government. There were good contacts with ministers and the Labour Party. CPAG was a tiny group with a small budget. Priorities had to be made. CPAG preferred to use its meagre resources to focus elsewhere.

9.1.1.2 Under Frank Field's Tenure

McCarthy argues that trade union relations under Frank Field were more

successful because of the attack on the unions by the Conservative government, that led to the Industrial Relations Act of 1971 and because of the change of leadership inside CPAG (McCarthy 1986 p.184). As far as the TUC itself is concerned the interest of the SIIWC became a reaction to policy rather than taking the initiative from 1970 onwards. The SIIWC was naturally interested in the FIS proposals, which it opposed (SIIWC 9.11.70, 9.12.70 TUCA). It also continued to advance claw-back arguments until 1971 (SIIWC 9.11.70, 13.1.71, TUCA). From 1972 most of the attention focused on tax credits and the SIIWC worked with the Economic Sub-committee of the GC on the issues around which parent should get the credit and at what level the credits should be paid (SIIWC 13.12.72 14.3.73, 11.4.73, 10.10.73). Crucially, the interest of the TUC and the trade union movement in family poverty generally increased during this period. A motion calling for attention to be paid to “problems of poverty arising in families of low paid workers and pensioners...” (TUC 1970 p.649) was carried at the 1970 congress. A more specific motion for the replacement of child tax allowances with significantly higher family allowances was remitted²²³ (TUC 1970 p.653). These were followed by motions for higher family allowances, which were carried in 1972, 1973 and 1974 (TUC 1972 p.499-500 1973 p.484 and 1974 p.444-450).

The change in the stance of the congress may have been partially due to the publicity around family poverty in the lead up to the 1970 election. However it was probably more to do with the fact that a Conservative government had been elected. Although FIS was announced too late for the congress, there was a fear amongst trade unionists that the Conservatives would introduce means tested schemes. It was the dislike of means testing which spurred the TUC into action in November 1970. Jack Jones representing the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) along with representatives from two other unions and nineteen social service pressure groups (including CPAG) urged the government to reconsider its plans particularly around family poverty (CPAG press release 4.11.70, box 70, PTA). This was a major coup for CPAG. The campaign even won support from Vic Feather, the General Secretary of the TUC and there was some correspondence at this time with the TUC about Family Income Supplement

²²³ When a motion is remitted it is sent back to the relevant GC committee for consideration.

(FIS) (McCarthy 1986 p.193)²²⁴.

However not all the improvement in the relationship between CPAG and the trade unions can be explained by the fact that the Conservatives won the election, increasing the likelihood of attack on the unions and means testing. The relationship had begun to improve when in April 1970 a joint letter was sent from CPAG and a number of unions to the Prime Minister urging action for poor families (EC minutes 18.4.70, file 4, box 65, PTA). At the AGM in April 1970 Giles Radice of the General Municipal Workers Union (GMWU) spoke after Ennals (AGM 19.4.70, file 4 box 65, PTA). It was these initiatives that led to the arranging of an exploratory meeting between union research officers and CPAG with the aim of “forg[ing] greater links between the group and the union.”

In retrospect, the period from April 1970 to December 1971 was the high point in CPAG’s relationship with the TUC. The joint campaign against FIS fizzled out after its great launch. There was some co-operation between individual unions and CPAG in a campaign against the SBC’s treatment of the workshy (EC minutes 25.6.71, file 5, box 65). Nicholas Bosanquet, a researcher at the LSE with good trade union connections, who wrote for *Poverty* (Bosanquet 1971 p.2-6), and Giles Radice of the General Municipal Workers’ Union (GMU) acted as two of the main contacts. The relationship advanced slowly and cautiously but did result in another exploratory meeting in September 1971. There was no immediate effect but it was all an exercise in gaining a better understanding of each other’s positions (Bosanquet in McCarthy 1986 p.219).

The improvement in the relationship was very gradual, for which there are a number of possible explanations. Firstly, CPAG became more interested in the unions. After the failure to extend claw-back in 1969, and the inactivity of the government (in public) in relation to the problem of family poverty, CPAG needed to look to influential groups outside Parliament and the government. The unions, which had successfully fought off the *In Place of Strife* proposals and were advancing the needs of pensioners, were the obvious allies.

The unions were also becoming easier to make contact with at a national level.

²²⁴The author was unable to locate any of this correspondence in the TUC’s archives.

The big unions were increasingly employing graduates with similar backgrounds to CPAG employees as researchers. It was with these researchers that Field made contact and worked to arrange meetings, not the union leaders *per se*. The researchers were interested in wider policy but had also been trying to make clear to CPAG that it needed to look beyond social security policy and see the wider economic picture of not just wages but also employment levels and their sustainability (Bosanquet 1971 p.2-6). However the researchers were themselves only on the outside of trade union policy making and the relationship could only progress slowly.

In addition, CPAG made efforts to prove that they understood the views of the unions and included a demand for a minimum wage in the 1970 memorandum *Poverty and the Labour Government*. CPAG also used the *Guardian* to try and get their message to trade union leaders. Field asked to speak to Jack Jones and other union leaders whilst they were being driven between meetings (Field interview), demonstrating to the unions that CPAG was serious about wanting to work with them.

The unions were also interested in working with other groups to oppose the Conservatives plans for more means testing to which they were diametrically opposed. However the GC's interest faded as FIS became a reality. SIIWC kept up its opposition for longer. The most important change however was that the congress itself was becoming interested in the problem of family poverty. Previously, any action on family poverty by the GC had originated from the SIIWC. However in 1970 and from 1972 onwards motions for better family allowances and more help for the low paid was originating from the congress itself. To an extent CPAG's work in keeping family poverty a live issue particularly throughout 1970 contributed to its higher profile amongst the politically active whether they be the TUC or the political party activists.

However, the progress was thrown into disarray by the publication in December 1971 of *The Poverty Trap* in *The New Statesman*. In this article, Field and an academic researcher, David Piachaud, argued that low paid workers with children were trapped into poverty by the means testing system. This meant that wage rises could result in very high rates marginal rates of taxation. As taking the poor out of

the trap could mean the need for pay rises of 40 to 50%, the authors suggested that a better solution would be for trade unions to make improvements in benefits part of the negotiations (Field and Piachaud 1971 p.791). The article was logical from the point of view of a group dedicated to gaining the best income for poor families, however it went against all the main beliefs of trade unionism. Trade unions existed to gain the best wage deals for all their members. The underlying belief was a worker's right to earn a decent wage, at the end of the day, for him and his family to live on (Jones 1972 p.7, Gee and Hartwell 1971 p.860, McCarthy 1986 p.201).²²⁵ In other words, the family wage for which trade unionists had fought for a century (Land 1975 p.167). If benefits were taken into account that would be the first step to the means testing of wages. In any case unions did "not negotiate directly with the government but with the employer" (Donnet and Lipsey quoted in McCarthy 1986 p.201).

In fact, the deal of the government improving social benefits and the trade union movement restraining wage demands that CPAG was advocating was accepted in 1973 by the unions as part of the *Social Contract*²²⁶ with the Labour Party. In return for modifying wage demands, social services would be improved by the government. Yet, in making such concessions to the Labour Party the unions were in a position of strength. The fact that such proposals were made by a small group, with no understanding of how wage negotiations, happened at a time when the unions had little trust in the government made the chances of success slight. CPAG itself recognised its relative ignorance in this field and Field agreed that the next members of staff employed should be a trade union liaison officer (Field, June 1972, file 7, box 65, PTA). She was appointed in April 1974.

There were links being established on a personal level by Field, who had a good relationship with David Basnett of the GMWU and Terry Parry of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) (McCarthy 1986 p.226, Streather interview). In addition, he had links with John Edmunds and wrote a great deal in trade union journals (Streather interview). Later the group's attendance at the Labour Party

²²⁵ Trade unions still concentrated their efforts on the male worker.

²²⁶ An agreement signed by the Labour Party and the TUC in 1973 which promised wage restraint in return for improvements in social benefits.

conferences²²⁷ and some of the women's TUC meant that more formal links with trade union representatives started to be developed (Streather interview, report of 1972 and 1973 Labour conferences files 7 and 8, box 65, PTA). Although this was not a cohesive policy towards the trade unions, at least it was a link with the unions, which could be built upon by a future trade union liaison officer.

9.1.2 CPAG and the Trade Union Movement at a Local Level²²⁸

In general, the branches of the CPAG were not hugely successful in forming links with trade unions and trade councils. Manchester, one of the oldest and biggest branches failed to impress the Manchester Trade Council (Bull₂ interview). However the Oldham Trade Council did affiliate in 1968 (Manchester and District Branch, Newsletter, December 1968 p.5). The Branch also gave talks to seven trade unions and trade councils in 1968. This was nearly half the political organisations that they spoke to that year, but this was an abnormally high proportion and was not repeated in 1969 (Manchester CPAG Annual Report 1969). The branch did start to form some local links with National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) and National Union of Teachers (NUT)²²⁹ and had a couple of meetings in 1971 with these unions, the local branch of DHSS and two professional groups²³⁰ to try and co-operate on welfare rights and the introduction of FIS. NUPE agreed to try and persuade more trade unions to co-operate (Manchester and District Branch, Newsletter, December 1968 p.3). The branch also had reasonably good links by 1970 with USDAW which had its head quarters in Manchester (Bull interview).

In Bristol, there was an attempt to establish links with the local trade council when the branch was established in 1971-2. This attempt also failed due to lack of interest on the part of the trade council (Bull₂ interview). The only real success was a link with NUPE that was established when a representative from the local NUPE branch spoke at the branch's second inaugural meeting (Bull₂ interview,

²²⁷ The group had been holding fringe meetings at Labour Party conferences since 1967. What was different about Streather and Weir's attendance was that they attended the whole conference in their CPAG capacity and even distributed briefing notes.

²²⁸ For most of the archival information on branches, I am indebted to Mr. David Bull and Professor John Veit Wilson.

²²⁹ The meetings also included representatives from a number of voluntary groups.

²³⁰ British Association of Social Workers and Education Welfare Officers

CPAG Newsletter no.5, June 1971).²³¹

Other branches periodically established some links. Clydeside made some “useful contacts” with the Glasgow District Trade Council, The Northern Irish CPAG meanwhile held a joint meeting with the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. This meeting aimed to publicise the activities of the group and discuss matters of common interest. Merseyside reported that it was able to give advice to social workers and trade union officials on appeals (Branch Newsletter, December 1968, no.2). In 1971, four branches reported to the Branches Council (BC) that they were co-operating with the trade union movement on specific policy issues²³² (BC minutes, 16.5.71).

CPAG branches did form periodic links with the trade union movement over specific policies but not strong, continuous links.²³³ Certainly trade councils were resistant to CPAG branches (Bull₂ interview). If the evidence from Bristol and Manchester is typical, then the national office’s request for branches to encourage trade councils to affiliate can only be described as naive. It was not just that the trade union movement was uninterested in CPAG, CPAG branches appear not to have considered the trade unions movement a priority. There is very little mention of trade councils or unions in the various branch newsletters or in the minutes of the Branch Council meetings.²³⁴

There were two main difficulties with branches being used to form local contacts with the trade union movement. The first problem was the spatial inequality in the spread of active branches. CPAG branches certainly did not cover the country evenly and the spread was constantly changing with branches opening and others becoming dormant. Most, although not all, were centred on university towns and

²³¹ The group was set up once (January 1971) and then for some reason collapsed. It was after Exeter was set up (November 1971) also using a NUPE representative as an inaugural speaker that Bristol was re-established later (in early 1972) (Bull₂ interview)

²³² Edinburgh was working with trade unions on wages councils, York on FIS, Tyneside with the trade council on school meals and Exeter was still in negotiations with its trade council about co-operating on the trade council survey of low pay.

²³³ The evidence on branches is scant but from what exists of branch newsletters, minutes and local branch newsletters and reports this is the conclusion that can be drawn.

²³⁴ There is very little mention of trade councils and unions in the newsletters. Wandsworth for example only mention trade unions in connection with Claimants Unions (Wandsworth Poverty Action Group newsletter no.5 October 1971, no.6 November 1971, no.8 December 1971, no.9 (4th) February 1972, no.10 (24th) February 1972, no.16 August 1972, no.17 (1st) September 1972, no.18 (27th) September 1972 no.19 October 1972) Cambridge Poverty Action Group also never mentioned trade unions or councils in its surviving newsletters (no.1 June 1971, no.5 autumn 1972, no.6 winter 1972/3, no.10 summer 74)

this was not necessarily where the most active and open trade councils and trade union branches were to be found. This was a problem that the CPAG national office was unable to solve.

The second was that preventing a closer relationship between the national office and the trade union movement nationally. Branches were dominated by professionals (especially social workers and academics) and the same sorts of people dominated the chairs and secretaryships of the branches (Worsfold 1971 p.344 and 342). Again these people had no experience of the trade union movement and no contacts within it. The trade union movement at a local level was even more suspicious of middle class professionals than at a national level. It also saw itself as the natural and legitimate protector of working people's rights and living standards.²³⁵ For their part many branches preferred to liaise with groups with which they already had contacts such as the local Labour Party²³⁶, professional social work groups and local voluntary groups²³⁷ (Worsfold 1971 p.338). Welfare rights and having a *direct* impact on poverty also consumed a lot of branches' energy,

9.1.3 Conclusion.

The TUC was a powerful organisation but CPAG was mostly ineffective in building a relationship with it and the trade union movement in general. The relationship did temporarily improve between 1970 and 1971 and CPAG was able to establish some links with the trade unions research officers and with the public sector unions more generally. Whereas CPAG had good links to the Labour Party and Parliament through an overlap of membership, it had few natural contacts with the trade union movement. The trade unions movement's ambivalence to the topic of family allowances and its lack of interest in CPAG meant that CPAG particularly under Lynes chose to channel its resources into the media, Parliament

²³⁵ This was made very clear by the leader of the trade council in Manchester to David Bull. He argued that the trade council had been fighting poverty for 100 years and did not need groups like the CPAG (Bull2 interview). It was also made clear by Mr. A. W. Allen of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers at the 1970 TUC. Whilst commending Shelter and the CPAG he argued that "We must not allow the initiative to be taken from us..." and although the voluntary groups were doing a "...splendid..." job "...it still means that the central problem of defending the wages of the workers of this country belongs to the trade union movement" (TUC 1970 p.650).

²³⁶ As 85% of branch executives responding to Worsfold's survey supported the Labour Party there were very good contacts with this group.

²³⁷ E.g. Councils of social service, community relations councils, Shelter and even pre-school play-group associations

and the Labour Party where it knew it would get a return on its investment.

However, the TUC independently promoted policies similar to those of CPAG even if it did not support CPAG. The SIIWC pushed for a similar scheme to CPAG from the mid 1960s. The *Social Contract* committed the Labour Party under TUC pressure to a programme of social reform. The general shift in attitudes described in chapter 8 also affected the TUC congresses. Congress had shown little interest in family allowances in the 1960s, yet in 1970 there was a much longer debate about poverty. CPAG might not have been persuading the trade unions directly, but its influence over the media and its contribution to the shifting of attitudes played an indirect role.

9.2 CPAG's Relationship with Other Groups

Working with and through other pressure and interest groups is a further way in which groups operate. The main advantages are that when unlikely bedfellows join together, they demonstrate to the government that there is a broad-based feeling on this issue. As campaigns can be expensive it means resources can be shared (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.105). However the disadvantages are that the discussions between the groups are often time consuming, one group acting irresponsibly can embarrass and damage all involved and well organised groups often have to use their resources to help the less well equipped (Whiteley and Winyard 1987 p.105-6).

There were two main types of relationship: formal co-operation between the two groups and informal links through membership overlap. Both were important at a national and local level. With regard to formal relationships there were essentially three periods and in each a different sort of relationship dominated. In the first year of its existence CPAG had a close relationship with its "parent bodies", the SEAC and FSU (see chapter 3.2). Between 1967 and 1969, CPAG had a close relationship with Shelter and a good relationship with other social policy single issue pressure groups. In the 1970s this close relationship with other groups changed to shallower relationship focused on campaigns. At the same time, a relationship with the NFCU started to develop through the CRO and Legal Department. At branch level, relationships with other groups depended on the

local personalities and relationships. Some of the branches were in practice behaving as servicing organisations for self-help groups (see chapter 4.1.5.3). This sub-section will explore how and why CPAG developed its links and why its links with other groups altered over time.

9.2.1 Relationship with other Single Issue Social Policy Pressure Groups

CPAG had a reasonably good working relationship with a number of single issue social policy pressure groups and some professional organisations. In 1967 and 1968 it participated in the signing of joint letters²³⁸ and in 1970 it sent a joint memorandum to the Chancellor with the NFOAPA (CPAG and NFOAPA 1970). As early as December 1966, representatives from Shelter, DIG and the National Council for the Unsupported Mother and her Child (NCUMC) spoke at CPAG's teach-in. In addition, CPAG not only agreed to co-operate with the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) on the issue of children's rights (EC minutes 10.11.67, file 1, box 65, PTA) but was also part of an attempt to co-ordinate anti-poverty groups in June 1968 (EC minutes 14.6.68, file 2, box 65, PTA).

Between 1967 and 1970, the group with which CPAG had its strongest links was Shelter. Its director was on CPAG's EC and the two groups shared a platform at the 1968 Liberal and Labour conferences (see chapter 7.1.1.1). In addition Shelter's director gave some informal financial support to the CPAG, placing at least one expensive advert in *Poverty* (EC minutes 14.2.68, file 2, box 65, PTA) and meeting most of the costs at the 1968 conference fringe meetings (Des Wilson interview, EC minutes 13.9.68, HWP). However after the failed merger attempt in 1969, the relationship cooled, although Des Wilson and Townsend shared a platform in the debate against Crossman in 1970 (see chapter 6.3.1).

CPAG co-operated closely with other groups for several key reasons. Firstly in the 1960s most of these groups were new and small. CPAG had only been formed in 1965, Shelter in 1966, and DIG in 1966. Therefore it made sense for the groups to co-operate. As there was public apathy towards family allowances and the poor, it

²³⁸ Letter to Michael Stewart dated December 1 1967 from CPAG, Shelter, DIG and the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child (NCUMC) and letter to Minister of DHSS March 1968 signed by the following social policy single issue pressure groups: CPAG, DIG, Association for Improvement in the Maternity Services, the professional groups, Association of Family Case Workers, Association of Medical Social Workers, The Consumers' Group and The Patients' Association.

was sensible for the CPAG to link themselves with groups who attracted more public sympathy, like the disabled and the elderly. Hence the joint memorandum in election year between the CPAG and the NFOAPA. As all the groups got bigger and more complex in their own right, the need and possibility of co-operating got more difficult,²³⁹ especially as changes in directors meant that personal relationships had to be renegotiated.

9.2.2 CPAG's Informal Links

CPAG had links through its EC membership with a number of other organisations. Firstly through Harriet Wilson (and to a lesser degree Walter Birmingham) CPAG had links with the SEAC. These links were important for the first year but gradually faded. However Wilson did write in *The Friend* on a number of occasions, educating further the Quaker community on the problems of poverty. Secondly through Philp and Rankin there were links with the FSU. The FSU was also active in some of the local branches. Thirdly, through the social workers on the early committee there were links to various social work groups and associations. These links were strengthened in the early years by Lynes and Olea Smith's attendance at the Generic Social Work Conference (Secretary's report November 1966, file 1, box 65, PTA) and co-operation with the Social workers section of the SMA over a conference (EC minutes 7.12.66, file 1, box 65, PTA).

However the relationship both informal and more formal with the social work community declined nationally throughout the 1960s as the number of social workers involved declined (see appendix E.3). CPAG also had informal links with the National Council of Women and the National Association of Mental Health through overlapping EC membership. There is no evidence that these links inspired any real dialogue with the organisations concerned. At the same time as the CPAG was losing informal links with some pressure groups it was gaining them with others. Townsend was heavily involved with the Disability Alliance and this created a good link between the two groups.²⁴⁰

9.2.3 Relations with the Claimants Unions in the 1970s

²³⁹ CPAG had by 1970 23 branches, Shelter 350

²⁴⁰ Townsend was one of the founders of Disability Alliance.

At a local level some branches had good relations with CUs. Wandsworth and York both started CUs in their areas (WPAG newsletter no.5, 31.10.71, BC minutes May 16 1971, JVWP). CPAG's York branch had a reasonably good relationship with Joe Kenyon who spoke to the York branch's CU when it opened and also attended a day conference on welfare rights in York (BC minutes 10.7.73 JVWP). However although sixty people were reported to have attended the opening meeting of the York CU, it was not a big success as people were reluctant to be labelled as unemployed or poor (BC minutes 16.5.71, JVWP Bradshaw interview). In Bristol and Tyneside there were much poorer relations between local CPAG's and CUs (Bull and Veit Wilson interviews). In Tyneside the CUs saw the CPAG as patronising, middle class and reformist and had little contact with them (Veit Wilson interview). The national CPAG did encourage CUs to pass cases onto CPAG branches and the CRO/Legal Department.²⁴¹

There was even hostility between some CUs and the CPAG. Bill Jordan a lecturer at the University of Exeter was closely involved with the CU in Newton Abbott. He attacked the CPAG arguing that they had advocated something along the lines of FIS. This Townsend strenuously denied. (Letter to Bill Jordan 2.4.73, file 7, box 65). The source of Jordan's argument appears to have originated from *The Poor and the Poorest* in which Abel-Smith and Townsend included in their list of possible solutions the extension of what was then NA to full time workers, but acknowledged the disincentive effects. However *Poor and the Poorest* never favoured one particular solution (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965 p.65).

CU branches did however approach CPAG for help. When only small amounts or old equipment were at stake, CPAG obliged (EC minutes 12.2.72, file 6, box 65, PTA). However, the relationship was always fragile. One example of the mistrust is CPAG's inability to support a CU, which asked for substantial funding for a van and petrol (North Staffordshire CU to Townsend 5.5.71, file 5, box 65, PTA). Townsend advised them to set up a front organisation to attract grants and offered to write to the press on their behalf (Townsend to N.S.CU 25.5.71 file 5, box 65,

²⁴¹ Townsend noted in late 1970 that he would ask the BC to agree in principle to cases coming from the CUs and he would tell the branches that they may pass them on. He would also write to Joe Kenyon with a list of branches and addresses (hand-written notes late 1970, file 4, box 65 PTA). Birmingham CU asked the Legal Department for help in 1970.

PTA). The CU reacted angrily accusing Townsend of trying to associate the CU with himself or CPAG. It argued that a front organisation would mean ultimately “sell[ing] out to the system and [those] that want only a few very minor changes in it.” Other CUs were warned to be on their guard in case they were approached by Townsend (Meeting of NFCU 1971, file 4, box 65, PTA). Clearly, despite the fact that often the CUs and CPAG were working on the same issues and for the same groups of people there was a fundamental distrust. CPAG were concerned that the CUs lack of organisation and conflict approach would reflect badly on the “acceptable” CPAG and the CUs were concerned that CPAG might try to buy their support.

9.2.4 The Relationship between CPAG and Other Pressure Groups

CPAG’s earliest and closest relationships were with its parent group the SEAC, social work groups and other similar pressure groups like Shelter. However the cooling of the relationship with Shelter and the tilting of the EC away from its social work roots led to the forming of links with other groups. CPAG aligned itself successfully with pressure groups such as NFOAPA and Disability Alliance on a number of occasions benefiting the attractive clienteles of these groups. The decision of the national CPAG to distance itself from the Claimants Unions was shrewd. The lack of discipline within the CU movement and their outsider status meant that they had the potential to embarrass themselves as a movement and any other groups associated with them. At a local level the connections with CUs might have had some benefits but risked the local CPAG’s as well as the national CPAG’s reputation. It was to CPAG’s advantage that most of the links were short-lived at a local level.

10 Chapter Ten: The Origins and Effectiveness of CPAG as a Pressure Group.

This chapter seeks to answer the two key questions that this thesis set itself. Firstly, drawing on the analysis in chapters 2.2 and 3.3, section 10.1 will offer an explanation as to why CPAG emerged as it did, when it did. Secondly, drawing on the framework offered in chapter 2.3 and the analysis of chapters 4 to 9; section 10.2 will assess how effective CPAG was as a pressure group. Finally, section 10.3 will offer some suggestions for further research.

10.1 The Origins of CPAG

It is clear that the environment was ripe for the emergence of single-issue pressure groups like CPAG in the 1960s. Although it is not true that pressure groups replaced political parties as the vehicles for change, it is clear that there was a growing recognition that they could complement political parties in achieving certain goals. Changes in higher education and social work meant that there was a growing group of professionals informed and interested in the problem of poverty. The rediscovery of poverty provided the catalyst for bringing the interested professionals together. They realised that pressure would need to be brought to bear on the government both directly and through the media, Labour Party, TUC and Parliament. In order to do this, there would need to be a formal group which was willing to have a high profile. Thus, it became clear that neither the SEAC nor the informal group based around Tony Lynes could fulfil that role and a new group needed to be formed.

10.2 The Effectiveness of CPAG

A framework for measuring efficiency and effectiveness has been discussed in chapter 2.3. It was argued that whereas efficiency can be measured using a clear model developed from models offered by Whiteley and Winyard (1987), Grant (1995) and Hall *et al* (1975), effectiveness is more difficult to assess. The assessment of effectiveness can only be made by using the evidence offered in chapters 4 through to 9 to answer the questions raised in chapter 2.3.3, taking into

account the efficiency of the group. This section is divided into two main sections. The first (10.2.1) uses the efficiency model offered in chapter 2.2 to evaluate CPAG. The second (10.2.2) offers an evaluation of CPAG's effectiveness.

10.2.1 The Efficiency of CPAG as a Pressure Group

10.2.1.1 The Political, Social and Economic Environment

The formation of the DHSS and the direct representation of the new department in Cabinet should have been beneficial to CPAG. CPAG was well-known, even by 1968, within the MSS and its views were considered by civil servants and ministers. The Social Security Minister, keen to promote the need for higher family allowances, was restricted by her lack of influence over the Cabinet. Yet, the appointment of the Cabinet heavy-weight, Crossman, did not bring the hoped-for benefits. Crossman was pre-occupied with other issues and thus it became clear that having a voice in the Cabinet was only an advantage if the Secretary of State was willing to fight for better family endowment. Herbison had been effective because she was personally concerned with the problem of child poverty. She used CPAG as much to further her own campaign for better family endowment, as it used her to further its campaign.

The structure of government meant that the MSS/DHSS had to be persuaded of the need for action and of the right course of action to take. The Minister or Secretary of State would take the government lead. Yet, at the same time the Treasury, which controlled government finance, had to be persuaded both to provide the funding and the legitimacy of linking the taxation and benefits systems. CPAG increasingly attempted to make contact with the Chancellor of the Exchequer but with limited success. Although Jenkins was less opposed to claw-back than his predecessor, he too accepted the Treasury wisdom that tax allowances were not a social benefit but an adjustment of liability according to responsibilities and that the cost of family allowances should be decreased rather than increased. The 1968/9 Treasury's interest in family endowment was driven by the desire to cut costs. The Tax Credit Scheme linked the two systems of tax and benefit together. However, this policy was due to the strong commitment of the Conservative Cabinet to a NIT. The strength of the Cabinet was able to override Treasury reservations in 1972.

CPAG was able to work with both the main parties when they were in power. Both the Wilson and Heath governments were committed to the Welfare State. The Conservative government was evidently concerned about the problem of poverty. However, whereas the Labour Cabinet showed itself to be against means testing and its supporters at conference confirmed this view, the Conservative Party was ideologically in favour of selectivity. CPAG therefore had to adapt its policies to try and convince the Conservatives of the economic disadvantages of means testing. Field refused to give in to his own left wing and campaign on issues of inequality. Instead, the campaign remained committed to better family allowances and a minimum wage, which could be introduced without overturning the whole benefit system. Yet, despite these tactics, the Conservative government used means tested solutions to ease the problem of poverty until 1972. The poverty trap debate, of which CPAG was part, reinforced the Conservative government's own concerns about the disincentive effects of means testing. The tax credit scheme may not have been a response to CPAG but CPAG was part of the debate, which discredited means tested alternatives.

There were competing claims on the government from other pressure groups. Naturally, no government could fulfil the demands of all the pressure groups at the same time, as Labour warned. However, CPAG believed that its best strategy was to promote its own cases as effectively as possible and only formed short-term relationships with other groups, such as NFOAPA, which offered an attractive client group. This also protected it from the risk of take-over. It is not possible to make a judgement as to whether CPAG made the right decision in not merging with Shelter. Certainly, a merger could have resulted in the issue of poverty being marginalised by the issue of homelessness. Yet, expert EC time was wasted on administrative and campaigning issues and CPAG lacked the skills to lead a populist campaign until the 1970s.

The economic constraints of both the Wilson and Heath governments meant that both governments were restricted in what they could do. It was imperative that CPAG kept the net costs of its proposals down to low net increased levels of expenditure. Thus by promoting claw-back, which cost a fraction of a general increase in family allowances, CPAG was showing itself to be realistic. This

realism paid off in 1967/8, when despite the need to cut expenditure Labour raised family allowances. Yet, the claw-back of 1967/8 meant that unless the government also raised tax thresholds through increasing child tax allowances, the scope for claw-back was almost exhausted. CPAG's failure to recognise this meant that it was unable to offer any realistic alternative to FIS.

There were social constraints on the government in the form of public opinion. Despite the fact that the government's knowledge of public opinion was limited, what the government perceives to be the opinion of key groups (such as target or marginal voters) in the months preceding an election is important. Thus the general unpopularity of family allowances and the popularity of tax allowances made claw-back a difficult choice to make, especially as it was a policy that was not easily explained to the public. The growing acceptability of family allowances in the 1970s, partially because of CPAG's campaigns made it easier for the government to take action.

10.2.1.2 *Internal Factors*

Becoming a formal group was a fundamental decision for CPAG, if an unconscious one. It was formal status that gave CPAG access to members and funding, which it needed if it was to carry out a protracted campaign. The decision to become a charity was successful from a financial viewpoint. CPAG's relatively slender financial resources throughout the period made its ability to attract grants from charitable trusts crucial.

CPAG developed an efficient internal structure, which created a good balance between accountability to its members and autonomy for the director, EC and chair. The limited democracy did mean that the EC was held accountable and that the members had to justify their re-election. On the other hand, its limited nature meant that the experienced and expert oligarchy, so respected by the government, remained in power and the group was saved from take-overs. Co-option further enriched its expertise. The erosion of the early balance of the practical skills of social work professionals and the theoretical knowledge of academics led to a dominance of the latter. The equilibrium was restored by the practical experience gained through welfare rights work from 1969.

10.2.1.3 *Domain Organisation*

CPAG was in competition with other pressure groups for national members who would pay their annual subscription and read *Poverty*. Passive members could afford to be members of several organisations. The opposite was true for active, local members, who often owed their first loyalty to another group. This led to a high turnover of branch memberships and large numbers of dormant branches. This was a problem for CPAG as it caused it to lose expertise.

10.2.1.4 *Strategies*

CPAG clearly attempted to use and communicate with the legal system, Whitehall and the SBC, the political parties, Parliament, the media, the trades' union movement and other pressure groups. Its effectiveness in using these channels of influence was affected by its own efficiency in communicating with them and by the structure of the other institution.

CPAG was highly successful not only at being *visible* in the broadsheet press but also in determining the *content*, being used as a *response* to government action and therefore *influencing* the government and determining the *climate*. Except for the *Poor and the Poorest* campaign, which attracted support from all sections of the media, CPAG did lack the ability in the 1960s to attract much attention from the populist press. Although it was trying to influence the political élite, its inability to explain its policies to the wider population meant that claw-back was resented by ordinary voters and trades unionists. The government was obliged to pay attention to its own party rank and file and the wider electorate, especially key voters. However, through building better links with the tabloid and local press in the 1970s, CPAG was able to widen its appeal. This may have contributed to the detectable shift in general public opinion towards greater tolerance of higher family allowances paid for by tax adjustments.

The media was clearly CPAG's greatest weapon. Herbison found CPAG's media campaigns useful as a political lever in the 1967/8 up-rating of family allowances. The attack on Labour in 1970, led to the Macleod pledge. The only negative aspect about CPAG's high profile in the media was that it (and in particular its more populist wing) tended to concentrate on the sensationalist and often welfare

rights aspects of CPAG's campaigns. This could skew the public's perception of CPAG's objectives.

CPAG was very efficient in its use of Parliament. Throughout the period CPAG was able to persuade sympathetic MPs to ask helpful questions in Parliament to challenge ministers and to elicit information. Tony Lynes was extremely successful at arranging for sympathetic MPs to ask oral questions, set up adjournment debates and use early day motions, all of which were designed to challenge Ministers about their policies. This strategy of asking oral questions continued under Field. Written questions aimed at eliciting information from the government greatly increased once Meacher had been elected to Parliament. Parliamentary questions consumed negligible resources for CPAG but could provide accurate information, which was not available elsewhere. The fact that some MPs used CPAG's campaigns in Parliament as a vehicle for furthering their or their party's own objectives raised the profile of poverty as an issue and CPAG as a group in Parliament. Although it is not possible to objectively evaluate Field's contact with the Conservative's HSSC back-bench committee, it is clear that this was an influential channel and one, which was receptive to CPAG arguments. However, CPAG might have benefited from making this contact earlier and also making contact with the Treasury back-bench committee of both main parties, given the Treasury's power. Yet, overall CPAG was generally highly effective in its use of Parliament and despite its limitations it was one of the first pressure groups to use the back-bench committees as a channel of influence.

Outside of Parliament, CPAG was more effective in making contact with and influencing the Labour and Liberal Parties than the Conservative Party. CPAG realised that it was going to have a better reception at the Labour and Liberal conferences and concentrated its resources on these, attending the Conservative conferences in a much smaller capacity. Many of the delegates knew of CPAG because of its high profile in the media and the growing debate around the issues of family poverty, rather than its presence at their conferences. Although, the attempt to use the Labour conference as a channel for influencing the manifesto was successful at getting resolutions passed, there is no evidence that the changes that CPAG pushed through were prioritised by the NEC. It is an example of

CPAG using a system very efficiently to at least get the Party to accept its policies. CPAG failed to capitalise on the relationship it had with the parties' central committees and research departments. Thus CPAG could be innovative in its use of the political parties as a channel for influence but failed to capitalise on all the opportunities open to it.

The attempts to work with the TUC were almost a complete failure, as most interviewees acknowledged. The sporadic attempts by Lynes were followed by unsuccessful attempts by Field. Just as CPAG was making some progress, the *Poverty Trap* debate exposed the huge rifts between trade unionism and CPAG. The TUC was a strong force in the Labour government and a powerful opponent to the Conservative government. Certainly, CPAG made little effort to understand trade unionism and trade unionism was hostile to the middle class experts, which it perceived to be the composition of CPAG. Yet the failure was softened by the fact that the TUC was pressuring government independently to raise family allowances and cut or abolish child tax allowances throughout the 1960s and shared CPAG's antipathy to means tested benefits.

CPAG's welfare rights strategy had a mixed effect on its efficiency as a pressure group. The national welfare rights strategy was undoubtedly successful in building up an expertise in welfare benefits and providing a service to poor people and other welfare rights groups. Representing claimants at tribunal offered often the opportunity for CPAG activists to effect immediate (if small) success. This, they found rewarding and gave them some satisfaction. The strategy added value to CPAG's campaign for improving family allowances in four ways. Firstly, the data and case studies of poverty added quantitative and qualitative evidence. This was seen as evidence by the government that CPAG was in contact with the poor. Secondly, the literature produced by the Legal Department and CRO became a not insignificant source of income for CPAG. Thirdly, it was easier to attract funding for welfare rights services than lobbying. Thus it provided useful evidence (which strengthened CPAG's legitimacy for the government). Finally, welfare rights protected CPAG's charity status, which offered considerable tax benefits.

However, there were two key risks associated with CPAG's welfare rights strategy: that welfare rights would distract CPAG's attention from lobbying and

that it would create the impression that welfare rights was the way to abolish poverty. The first risk was only partially managed. The CRO and Legal Department were separate from the rest of CPAG and separately funded. Thus staff resources were not significantly diverted into welfare rights activity. However in the branches the opposite was true and resources were diverted.

The second risk was very difficult to manage because the media not CPAG were in charge of the media agenda. Thus, press releases about CPAG's welfare rights work were eagerly seized by the media (and in particular the populist and regional press) whilst information about CPAG's lobbying activities did not reach print. At a national level the fact that CPAG and its welfare rights wing were kept separate was important. Increasingly, CRO took on the cases, which were unlikely to evoke public sympathy (e.g. cohabitation, prisoners' rights to benefit). At a local level, this separation was less clear and had a negative effect on public perceptions of CPAG.

One area in which CPAG was very effective was in producing welfare benefits advice literature. This literature was used by other welfare rights advice organisations, social workers and some lawyers to provide a basis for understanding what was increasingly becoming a complex system. By understanding what claimants were entitled to receive, CPAG was successful in undermining the discretionary system further.

Thus the welfare rights strategy is complicated. In contributing towards CPAG's key objective it had a mixed effect, although on balance it was probably more of help than hindrance. Increasingly, welfare rights became an objective in itself, although at the level of lobbying against the increasing use of means-testing as the method of targeting help and against the use of discretion, rather than individual case work for its own sake. The test case strategy designed to challenge discretion and local office interpretation of benefit rules resulted in little success, despite the huge expense. There was, however always a tension in CPAG as to how far welfare rights was a lobbying issue in its own right and to strengthen the case for universal family allowances and how far it was a service to the poor. This was never resolved at a local level.

Field argued that in order to be effective a pressure group needed to be focused. However CPAG did campaign on a number of wider issues related to social security benefits. It is clear that the wage stop campaign had a direct bearing on family allowances. The large numbers of people on the wage stop in the 1960s illustrated that many families with children were unable to have a standard of living comparable to NA/SB whilst in work. The wage stop could only be abolished if something was done to improve the income of families whilst in work. Although CPAG campaigned for the abolition of the wage stop it knew that the wage stop could not be abolished unless the social wage for those in work was increased. Thus success in persuading the government to abolish the wage stop was inseparably linked with persuading the government to improve support for families in work.

CPAG had an effective relationship with the SBC. Even though the SBC was unable to accept CPAG's views completely it was willing to consider them, which was quite a feat for such a small pressure group. Certainly in the 1960s, the SBC made a number of small changes to policy after CPAG insider and media pressure. However the SBC was a willing target, the Secretary of the SBC had already made changes and many of the commissioners were sympathetic to at least some of CPAG's views.

Clearly, CPAG had insider status within the MSS/DHSS. The links that Lynes, Townsend and Abel-Smith had with Labour ministers meant that there was a close and at times even co-operative relationship between CPAG and the Social Security Minister. However, this close relationship was not able to prevent Labour introducing policies, which curtailed benefit entitlements, as well as improving welfare benefits. Field never had these links and the reluctance of the government to take the measures further meant that, although CPAG retained its insider status, there was a need to force the issue back onto the agenda of preoccupied government. The distance created between CPAG and the Labour government by the *Poor get Poorer under Labour* demonstrated to the Conservatives that CPAG was non-partisan and led the way to the building of a good relationship with the Conservative government.

The change in secretary/director did affect CPAG's tactics. CPAG had clearly

always been a high profile group using the media and Parliament but the tone of the Field leadership was more confrontational than Lynes'. Clearly the change in Minister and Labour's declining public interest in the problem of family poverty were also important. The election of a Conservative government with which CPAG had no natural contacts meant that CPAG had to change its contacts.

10.2.2 How Effective was CPAG?

Section 10.2.1 has explored how CPAG used the resources available to it during the period. This section assesses how effective CPAG was as a pressure group using the framework set out in chapter 2.3.3. This framework establishes two different measures of effectiveness. The first is to measure CPAG's achievements against its objectives. The second is the way in which CPAG as a pressure group was perceived by the people in power.

10.2.2.1 CPAG's Effectiveness in Achieving Its Own Objectives

The objectives of CPAG changed over time and new ones were added. Some of CPAG's objectives carried more weight than others. However it is possible to pick out the key objectives and evaluate to what extent CPAG was able to succeed in realising them. The key objective for CPAG throughout the whole period was to persuade the government of the need to raise family endowment for the poorest families by increasing universal family allowances and reducing tax allowances for children. Although the amounts increased during the period, the basic argument remained the same. However, from 1968, CPAG became increasingly more interested in the issue of welfare rights. A core argument of CPAG's was that means tested benefits (to which both Labour and Conservative government resulted more and more in order to target help on the poorest) created disincentive effects, never reached large numbers and were stigmatising. CPAG therefore campaigned to prevent help to poor families being offered in the form of means tested benefits, and if it was offered in the form of means tested benefits that these benefits should be as of right, and not at the discretion of the benefit office decision-maker. More specifically CPAG led campaigns to abolish or reform specific benefit rules, in particular the wage stop and the cohabitation rule.

CPAG was set up to campaign about the child poverty identified in the *Poor and*

the Poorest. The group agreed that the best way of doing this without stigmatising or creating work disincentives was to raise family allowances from eight shillings for the second and ten shillings for the third and subsequent child to twenty five shillings and thirty five shillings respectively, with a ten shilling allowance for the first child. This would be paid for by reducing the child tax allowances. In 1967/8, the government doubled family allowances with claw-back. In 1970, family allowances were not increased but FIS, a means tested benefit for working families was introduced. In 1972, the Conservative Party's tax credit scheme offered a child tax credit of £2 for each child and the Labour Party signed up to child benefit (a tax-free universal benefit to replace family allowances and child tax allowances) as part of the social contract with the TUC.

In chapter 2.3.3, it was argued that a pressure group's effectiveness in persuading the government can be measured at two levels. A pressure group needs to persuade the government that there is a problem worthy of its attention. It is harder however, for a pressure group to succeed at the second level of persuading the government that its solution to the problem is the optimum. In 1967, CPAG persuaded the government that there was a problem. The huge publicity around *The Poor and the Poorest* initiated the debates within government. Although, CPAG's solution was the one adopted, it was the fact that the Trade Unions and many in the Labour Party were unwilling to agree to the alternative of means testing that claw-back won the day.

In 1970, the Conservative government was keen to do something about family poverty and quickly. The credit for this urgency can be placed firmly with CPAG. It was CPAG that pushed the issue back onto the agenda with its attack on Labour's record and elicited a promise from the Shadow Chancellor that the Conservatives would use claw-back to improve family allowances. Yet, the Conservative government realised that claw-back would be difficult because of the way in which tax thresholds had been eroded. Unlike, the Labour Party, there was no historic dislike of means-testing as a method of targeting help. Thus although CPAG was highly effective in persuading the government of the problem, it was unable to persuade it of the solution.

By 1974 both of the main political parties were signed up to an amalgamation of

family allowances and child tax allowances, which would be paid to the main carer. The amounts suggested were roughly equal to those advocated by CPAG. The Conservative Party became increasingly convinced of the disincentive effects of means-tested benefits and was keen to tidy up the tax and benefit systems. The Labour Party was keen to make a deal with the trade unions that in exchange for social benefits (including non-means-tested help for working families) wage inflation would be limited. CPAG did its part in keeping the issue of family poverty on the agenda and in persuading the Conservative government that means-tested benefits created disincentives. However, it is clear that in the development of both the tax credit scheme and child benefit CPAG was only one of the influences.

The 1970 polemic *Poverty and the Labour Government* drew attention to the problems of relying on means-tested benefits as a solution to poverty. CPAG's success in reducing the importance of means-testing in the social security system was mixed. The tax credit scheme devised by the Conservative government would have reduced the reliance of large numbers on means tested benefits (although the poorest and the self-employed would have remained dependent on means-tested benefits). Yet both Labour and Conservative governments increased the number of mean-tested benefits whilst in power. Discretion in means-tested benefits declined because of the sheer expense in training staff to make such decisions but also because SBC, under pressure from CPAG, started to produce guidance on rights to social security benefits and CPAG's own publications made claimants and social workers more aware of the minimum standards of benefit to which they were entitled. CPAG was clearly part of the more general movement to make social security more of a right to which people were entitled.

The wage stop and the cohabitation rule were not abolished before 1974. Despite the good relationship between CPAG and the SBC the successes were limited. The wage stop was softened but CPAG was unable to persuade either the SBC or the government to significantly alter some of its key benefit rules. The good relationship had few short-term pay-offs.

10.2.2.2 *Perceptions of CPAG's Effectiveness*

Whiteley and Winyard used the opinions of those in pressure groups or observing pressure groups from within Parliament to assess their effectiveness. The view of CPAG members about CPAG is that it was extremely effective during this period, given the resources available to it. More significantly civil servants and politicians believed to be a pressure group to which it was worth listening. In general it was CPAG's high profile campaigns which attracted the attention of the press which brought them to the attention of government. The *Poor and the Poorest* campaign brought CPAG to the attention of the Cabinet and Prime Minister. The *Poverty and the Labour Government* campaign attracted the attention of Ennals and to a lesser extent Crossman. However, it was CPAG's welfare rights work, proving that they were at least in touch with the people on whose behalf they spoke combined with its academic credentials which convinced Dean as a junior minister that they were a group to which it was worth talking. Thus CPAG were at their most effective when they could harness the power of the media to create high profile stories. Yet, increasingly, the steady record of work and expertise made CPAG a key part of the social security policy community.

10.2.2.3 *How Effective was CPAG in Relation to its Resources?*

CPAG was clearly an effective group, which by 1974 had contributed to an environment in which it was mainstream politics to increase family allowances by abolishing child tax allowances. The influence of CPAG in the doubling of family allowances and the introduction of FIS was not insignificant. Although the use of means testing as a method of targeting help was introduced during the period into more areas of social policy, there was a general acceptance that the poverty trap was a problem.

Although the group was still small it had grown to employ seven policy and research staff in addition to administrative staff by 1974. It was able to generate its own income from literature sales, research and welfare rights grants and membership; it was not totally dependent on any income. It was also well established as a pressure group. It was clear that even if its key objective of increasing family allowances by abolishing child tax credits were fulfilled it

would continue to campaign on other poverty issues, increasing welfare rights issues.

Thus CPAG was an effective pressure group not only because it had contributed to a change in policy but also because it had established itself as an integral part of the social security policy community. It was in a prime position to take on new campaigns and become a permanent fixture on the political scene, changing its objectives as the political agenda and issues changed.

10.3 Further Research

This study has provided a comprehensive history of CPAG between 1965 and 1974 as well as being a case study of an early single-issue pressure group in the social policy sphere. However because of the need to stay focused, the study is restricted in terms of chronology and the breadth of issues considered. The purpose of this section is to raise some questions for further research.

Firstly, this study only concentrates on the period up to 1974 and the election of the new Labour government. This time period was specifically selected so as to allow for the study of CPAG whilst a Labour and Conservative government was in power. However the period following the election up until the introduction of child benefit in 1976 was an interesting one for CPAG and one which deserves more academic study to complement the studies undertaken by Land (1976) and McCarthy (1986). In addition, there has been no detailed academic assessment of CPAG after 1983. However, as this study illustrates in its analysis of the Heath government, whilst the public records are closed, the ability of academics to really understand what was happening at the heart of government in any detail is restricted.

There is also a need for more research into the other pressure groups, which were emerging at this time. Although there have been short analyses, there have been no in-depth academic studies of groups such as Shelter or the Claimants' Unions. The latter has only attracted personal accounts (Kenyon and Gould 1972, Jordan 1973). If the dynamics of pressure groups in the 1960s and 1970s are to be

understood then there needs to be a wider sample of case studies for social scientists to draw upon, especially if we are to understand at what level pressure groups can be effective. Thus was CPAG typical in being an effective catalyst or are there examples of groups persuading the government to accept their solutions?

The rediscovery of poverty has been mentioned in numerous academic studies but only Banting (1979) and Sinfield (1968) really examine the phenomenon in detail. Even more neglected by researchers are the reasons as to why the rediscovery of poverty was a phenomenon that occurred across the Western World. Apart from Sinfield's 1968 paper on the topic, there has been no comparative research or examination of how the rediscovery of poverty was handled by interested groups or the government in countries other than Britain and USA. Such comparative research would shed light on the analysis of how different the political, economic, social and cultural values of a country affect the way in which an issue is handled.

The 1960s witnessed an increase in the number of new pressure groups formed. Chapters two and three of this study have examined the theoretical explanations for the formation of such pressure groups and offered explanations for the formation of CPAG at this time. However, so that these theoretical explanations might be further developed and the origins of pressure groups better understood, there is a need for more such studies of other pressure groups formed in the 1960s and early 1970s. Given that the formation of single-issue groups was very much a feature of the 1960s it would also further the historical study of that period of great social and cultural change.

Appendix A

Professor Brian Abel-Smith

d. 4 April 1996

Professor of Social Administration at the University of London LSE 1965-91

Born in 1926, Abel-Smith served in the army and then was educated to doctorate level at Cambridge University. In 1953-5, he was a research fellow on the Guillebaud Committee, which undertook a review of the National Health Service. He then became an assistant lecturer at the London School of Economics, becoming a lecturer in 1957, a reader in 1961 and a professor in 1965. In 1961, he was seconded to Yale University in the USA. He was a special advisor to the Secretary of State for Social Services in 1968-70 and 1974-8.

Publications about Poverty Issues before 1974:

1965 *The Poor and the Poorest* (with Peter Townsend)

1967 *Lawyers and courts* (R Stevens)

1968 *In Search of Justice* (with M Zander and R Brooke)

1973 *Legal Problems and the Citizen*

1974 *People without a Choice*

Professor Jonathan Bradshaw

Bradshaw was a young academic of Social Administration at the University of York when he became a member of CPAG. He stood as a Labour Parliamentary candidate in 1970 but was unsuccessful. He did however become a Labour member of the local council. He wrote extensively for CPAG and as an academic.

David Bull

Bull was a young academic in Manchester when he became interested in CPAG. In 1970, he took a lecturing job at the University of Bristol and was the force behind the Bristol branch. He wrote extensively for CPAG and as an academic.

Iain Jordan

An academic in Edinburgh. He an active Labour Party member and was involved in the Workers' Educational Association. He was chair of the Scottish Poverty Action Group from 1967 but his key position on CPAG's EC had weakened by 1971.

Tony Lynes

Lynes trained as an accountant but opted to become Titmuss' research assistant. In 1965 he was seconded to the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance. Where he worked as a relatively junior civil servant researching family endowment. Although it was the Minister Herbison who asked Lynes to join the Ministry he was not her advisor and had few official meetings with her. They did meet informally though. In August 1966, he became CPAG's first full time employee. He moved in 1969 to Oxford Children's Department where he worked as a welfare rights advisor. He rented a cottage at this time from Richard Crossman on his estate. Later he was to become an advisor to Barbara Castle during the 1974-9 Labour government.

Fred Philp

In 1965, Philp was the Secretary of the Family Service Units. He was a leading social work manager. His background was very much as a social worker but he did contribute to leading social work journals.

Tony Rees

Rees was a young academic at the University of Southampton who was involved in setting up the Southampton CPAG branch.

Jane Streather

Streather was a young academic at the University of Hull when she became the deputy director of CPAG in 1972. She became in 1975 the director of the National Council for One-Parent Families.

Professor Peter Townsend

Townsend was born in 1928. After being educated at the University of London and Cambridge. He worked for two years in the *Frei Universität* in Berlin before becoming a researcher at the Institute of community Studies. In 1965 he became a reader in Social Administration at the London School of Economics. In 1965 he moved to the University of Essex where he became a professor. From 1972-80 he was the Chair of the Fabian Society. 1968-83 the President of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. From 1974 he was the Chair of Disability Alliance.

Publications about Poverty before 1974:

1957 *The Family Life of Old People*

1957 *Superannuation*

1961 *Nursing Homes In England And Wales*

1962 *The Last Refuge: A Survey of Residential Institutions and Homes for The Aged in England and Wales*

1965 *The Poor and The Poorest* (with B. Abel-Smith)

1968 *Old People in Three Industrial Societies*

1970 (Ed) *The Concept of Poverty*

1972 (Ed) *Labour and Inequality*

1973 *The Social Minority*

Stuart Weir

Born in 1938 and educated at Oxford University, Weir became a journalist. He was a feature writer for the *Oxford Mail* 1964–67 and diarist with *The Times*, 1967–71 before becoming a director of the Citizens Rights Office, CPAG, 1971–75. Later he was deputy editor of *New Society*. He was a founder and Chair of Family Rights Group and in 1975 founder and EC member of Charter 88, He was a member of the Finer Joint Action Committee, 1970–84 and (Founding), Labour Co-ordinating Committee in 1979. Between 1964-72, he was active in anti-racist and community groups, Oxford and Hackney. Between 1964–72, he was a member of (Lab), London Borough of Hackney Council.

John Veit Wilson

The son of Harriet Wilson was a researcher at the London School of Economics before moving with Townsend to the university of Essex as a researcher. In 1968 he moved to Newcastle where he became a lecturer and later Professor at Newcastle Polytechnic.

Malcolm Wicks

Wicks was born in 1947 and was thus only a young academic when he first became involved in CPAG in 1970. He was a Fellow of the Department of social Administration at the University of York. He then became a research worker in the Centre of Environmental Studies and was a lecturer at Brunel University in London.

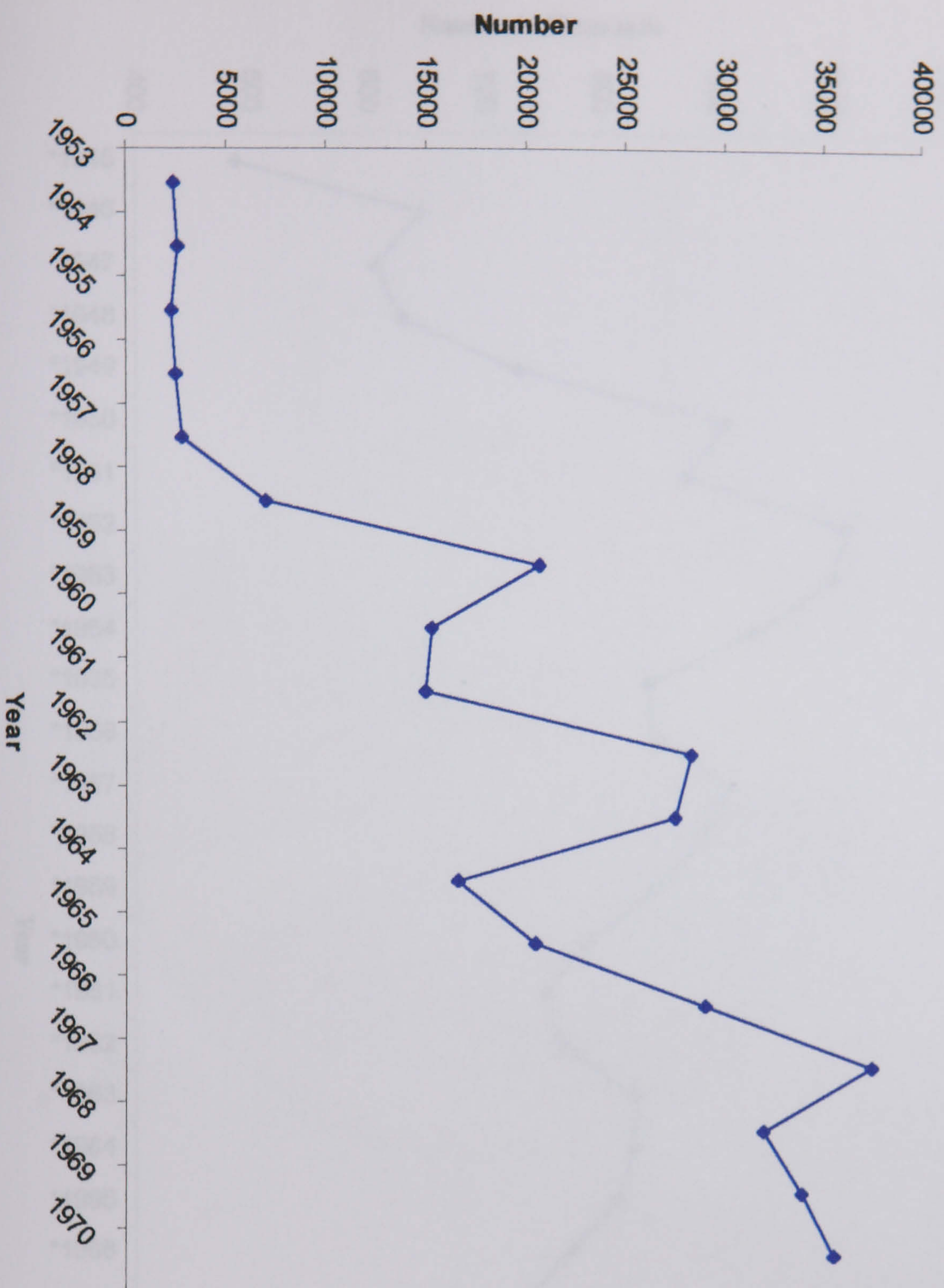
Des Wilson

Born in 1941 in New Zealand, Wilson started his career as a journalist-broadcaster. 1967-71, he was the director of Shelter the National Campaign for the Homeless. He was a member of CPAG's EC from 1967-69. He was on the EC of the National Council for Civil Liberties from 1971-3. He was a member of the Committee for City Poverty from 1972-3. He was a columnist for the *Guardian*, the *Observer* 1971-5 and *Illustrated London News* 1972-85. He contested the Hove constituency in 1973 Parliamentary by-election for the Liberal Party and was a member of the Liberal Party Council from 1973-4.

Harriet Wilson

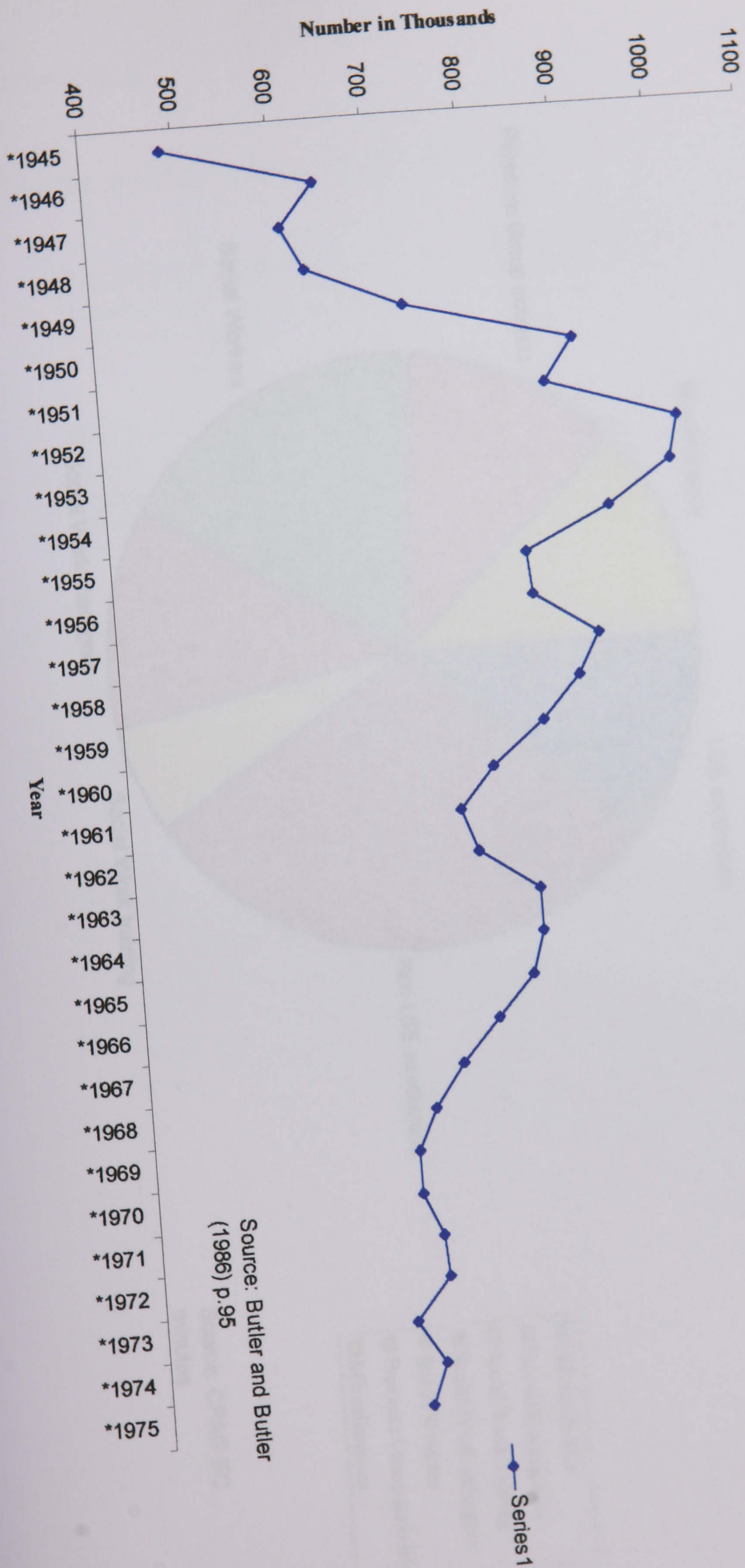
Born in Germany in 1916, Wilson moved in England in 1936. She worked first at the University of Wales and later moved to a Criminology post in the University of Birmingham. Wilson was a leading member of the Quakers' Social and Economic Affairs Committee. Her Quaker connections meant that not only did she know Walter Birmingham but Lord Sainsbury, a generous contributor to CPAG. John Veit Wilson is her son.

Appendix B: Number Subject to the Wage Stop In November 1953-70

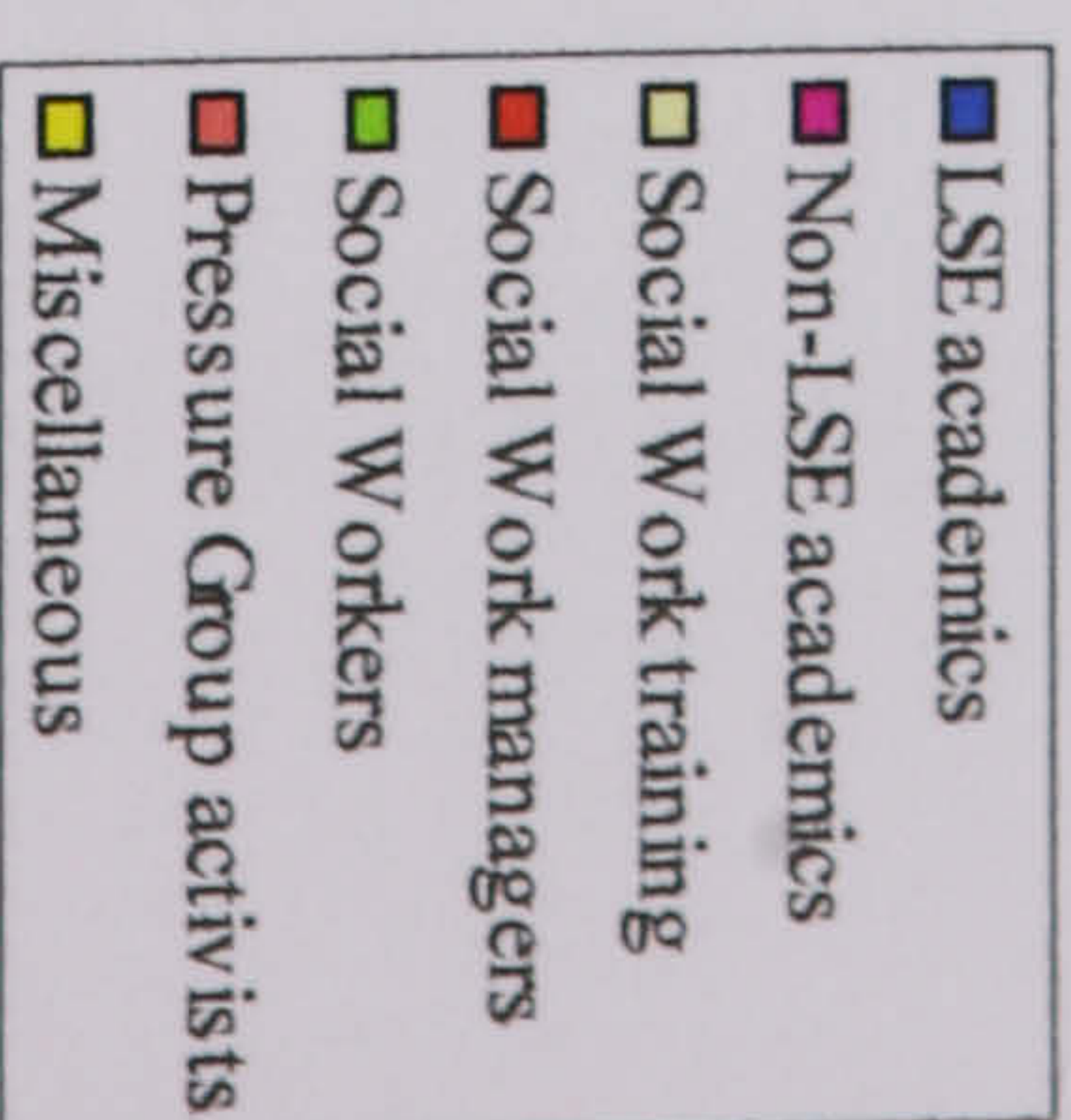
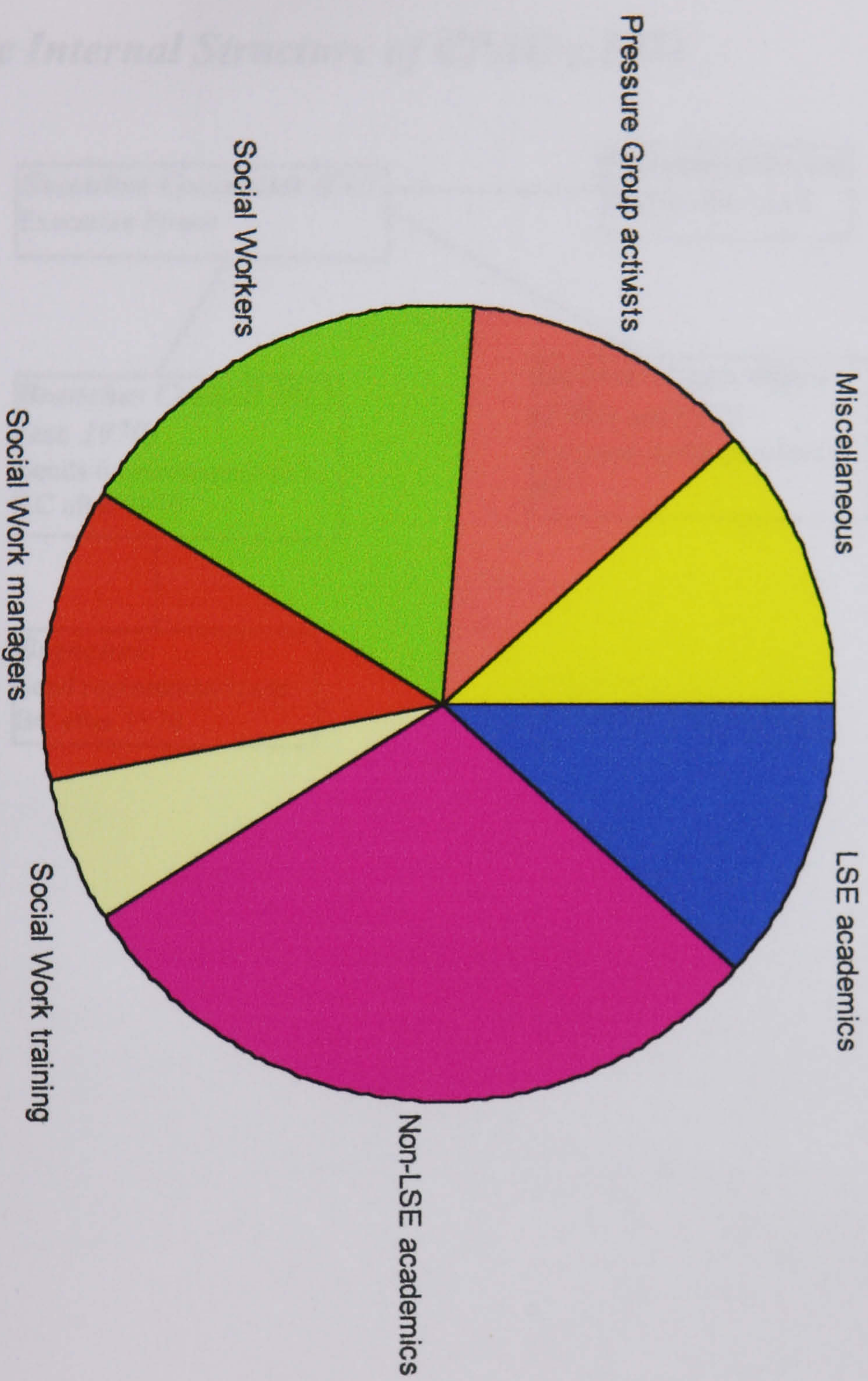


Source: Hansard vol. 822 col. 326-7

Appendix C Individual Membership of the Labour Party 1945 - 1975



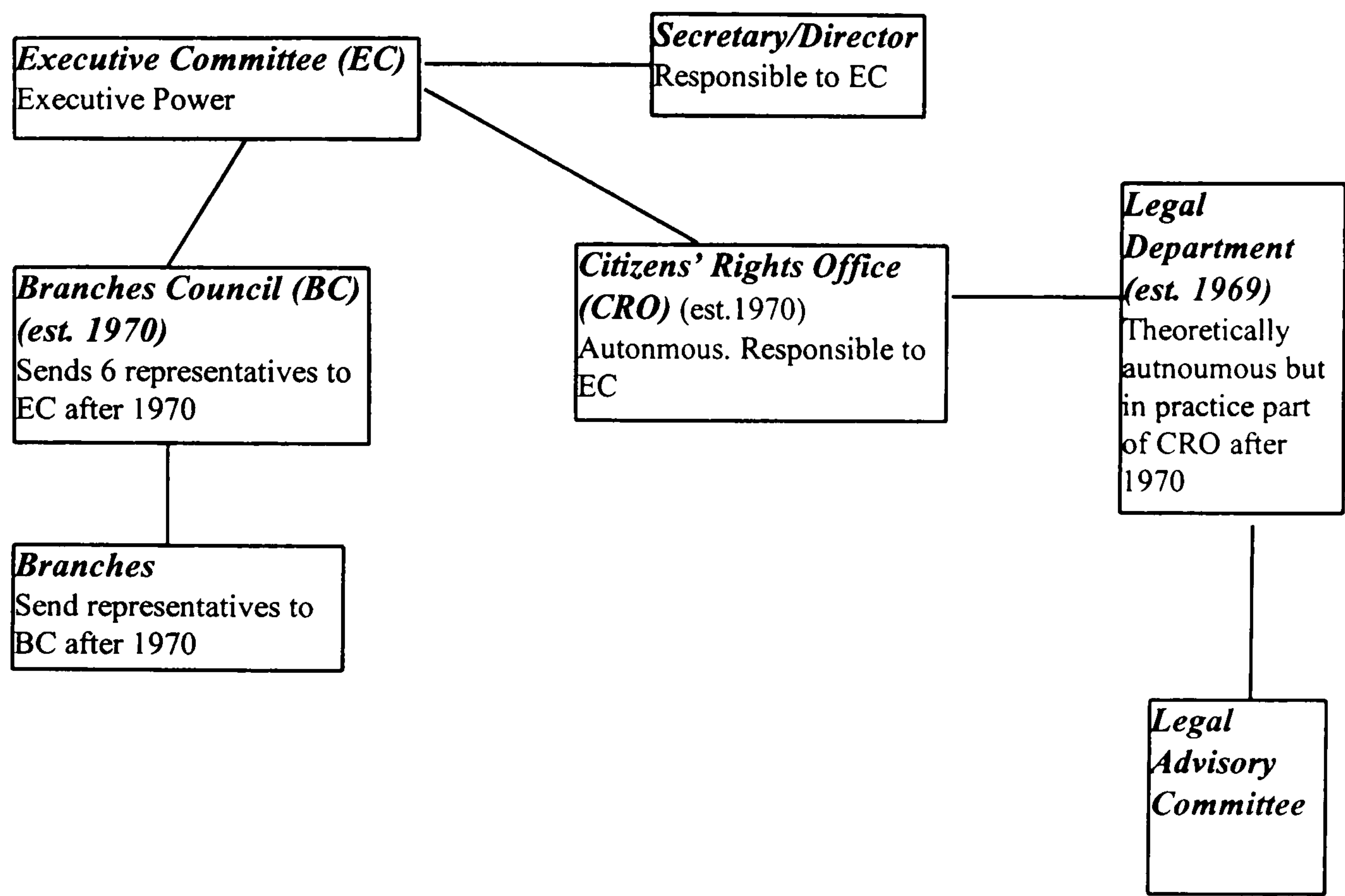
Appendix D The Composition of CPAG April 1965 - August 1966



Source: CPAG EC minutes

E Appendices E

E.1 The Internal Structure of CPAG c.1974



E.2 Membership and Attendance of the EC

Core Membership

Chair: Fred Philp (April 1965-July 1969)

Fred Philp (July 1969-July 1973)

Chair: Peter Townsend (July 1969-)

Peter Townsend (October 1965-July 1969)

Hon. Sec: Harriet Wilson (April 1965-)

Treasurer: Walter Birmingham (April 1965-Jan 1969)

Walter Birmingham (Jan 1969-June 1971)

Audrey Harvey (April 1965-September 1970)

Margaret Bligh (April 1965-Nov 1970)

John Veit Wilson (April 1965-)

Geoffrey Rankin (April 1965-July 1967)

Barbara Drake (April 1965-March 1967)

Morna Smith (April 1965-March 1967)

Elizabeth/Betty Gittus (May 1965 -March 1967)

Brian Abel-Smith (April 1965-October 1968)

Tony Lynes (April 1965 - July 1965/ January 1969-1971)

Core Branch Members*

Rosemary Vear (July 1967-Nov 1970)

Iain Jordan (Nov 1967-Nov 1970)

David Bull (Oct 1967)

Jonathan Bradshaw (Oct 1968-)

Tony Rees (Oct 1968-)

Non-Core Branch Members

Louis Minster (Oct 1969-April 1970)

Barbara Starkey (May 1971-May 1972)

John English (May 1971-May 1972)

John Ward (May 1972-May 1973)

John Creighton (May 1972-May 1973)

Tom Rivers (May 1972-May 1973)

Peter Moore (Nov 1972-July 1973)

Mike Adler (May 1973-)

David Vincent (May 1973-)

Occasional EC

Anne Reynolds (July And Sept 1968)

Kevin Barkla (Oct 1968-1969)

Joe Streater (Oct 1969-Feb 1970)

Peter Moss Oct 1969-Jan 1971

Co-optees

Des Wilson (Feb 1967-March 1969)

Beti Jones (June 1967-September 1967)

Treasurer: Trevor Bell (Jan 1969-June 1971)

Audrey Smith (May 1969-Oct 1969)

Sir John Walley (Jan 1970-June 1970)

Michael Meacher-Sept 1969-

Treasurer: Gary Runciman (Feb 1972-)

Joyce Pick (May 1972-)

Tony Atkinson (July 1972-)

Roy Parker (only Dec 1971)

Malcolm Wicks (June 1970-)

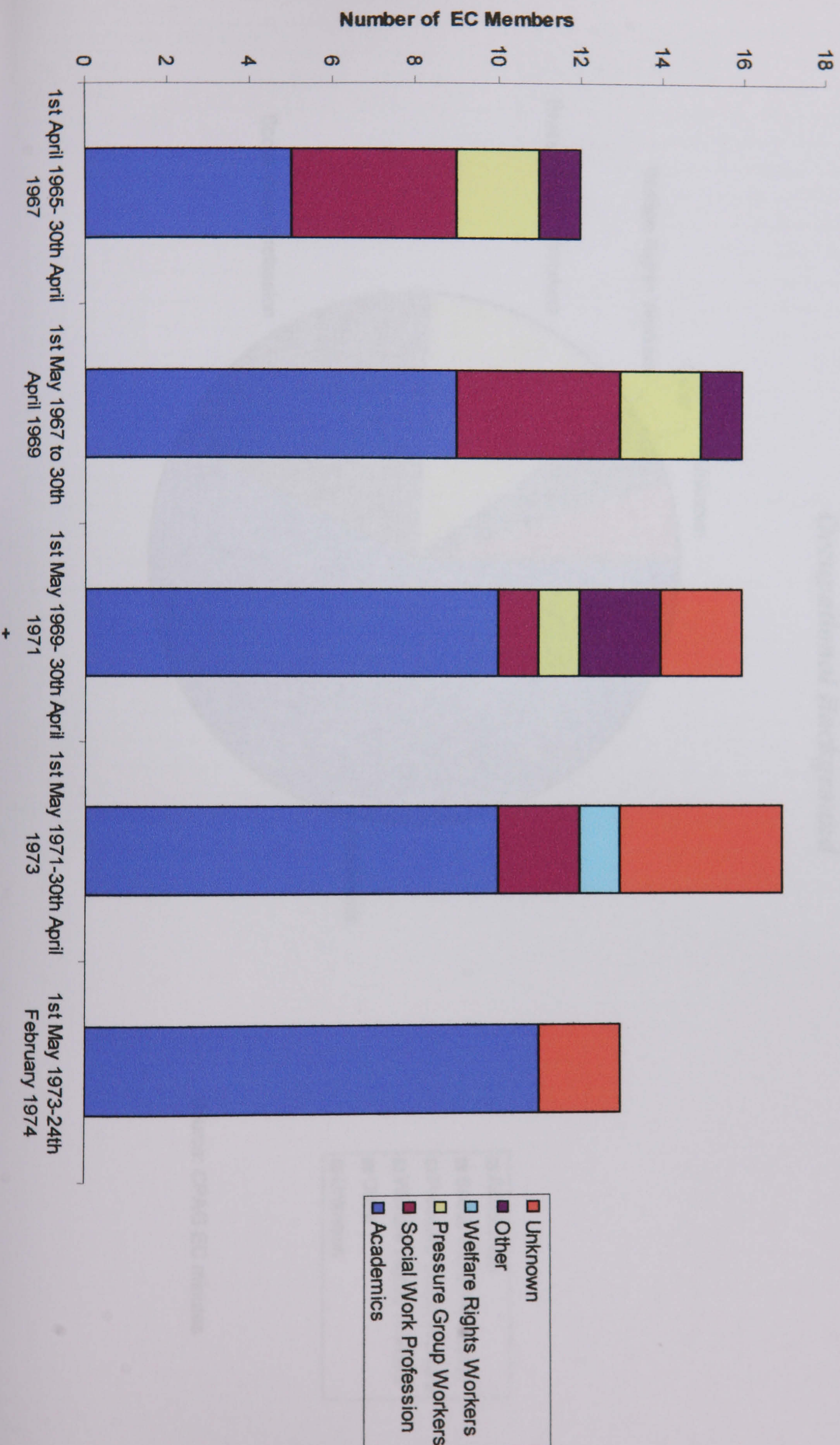
Each Member who stayed part of the EC for more than one year and were initiated with more than branch interests

Honorary Secretary

Treasurer

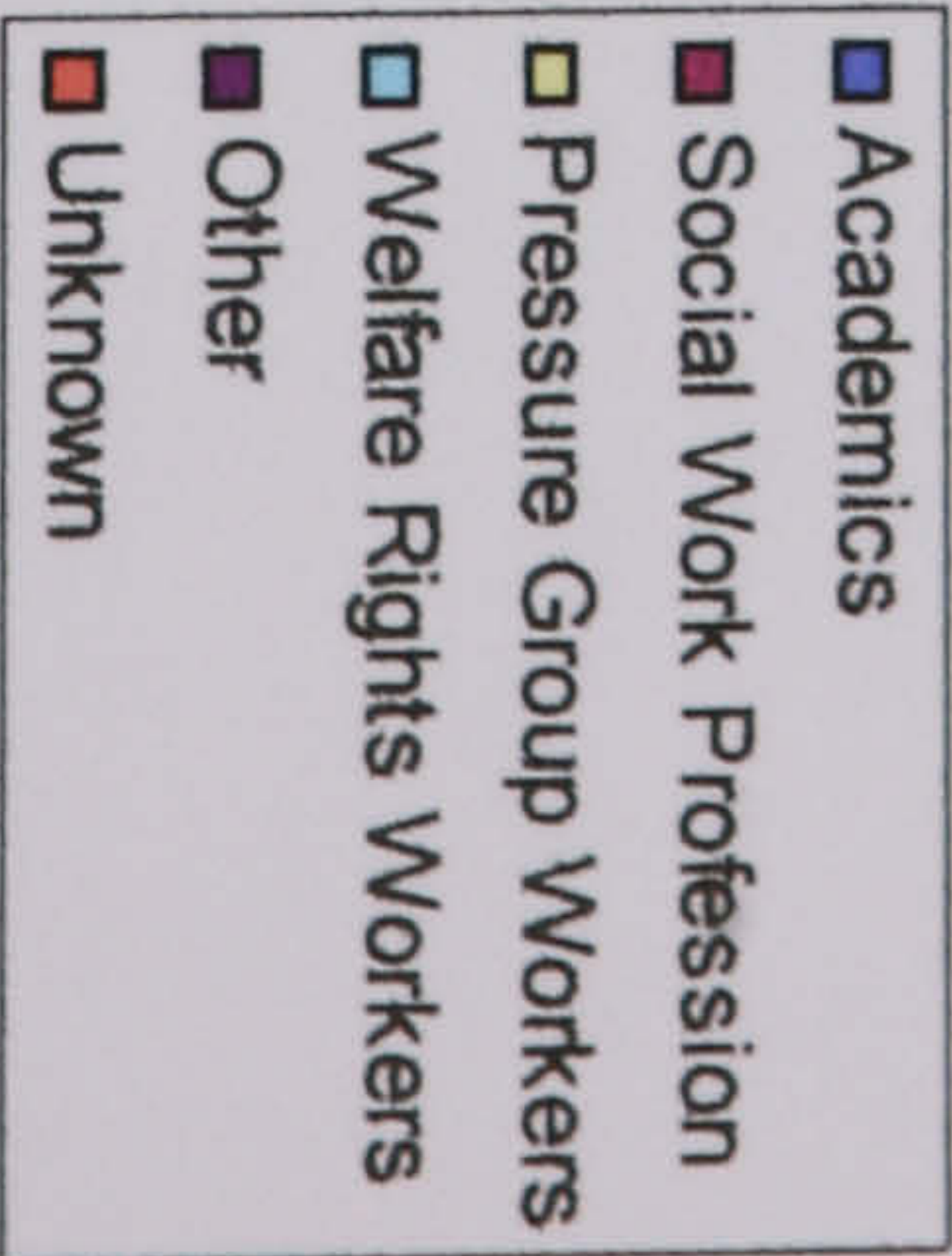
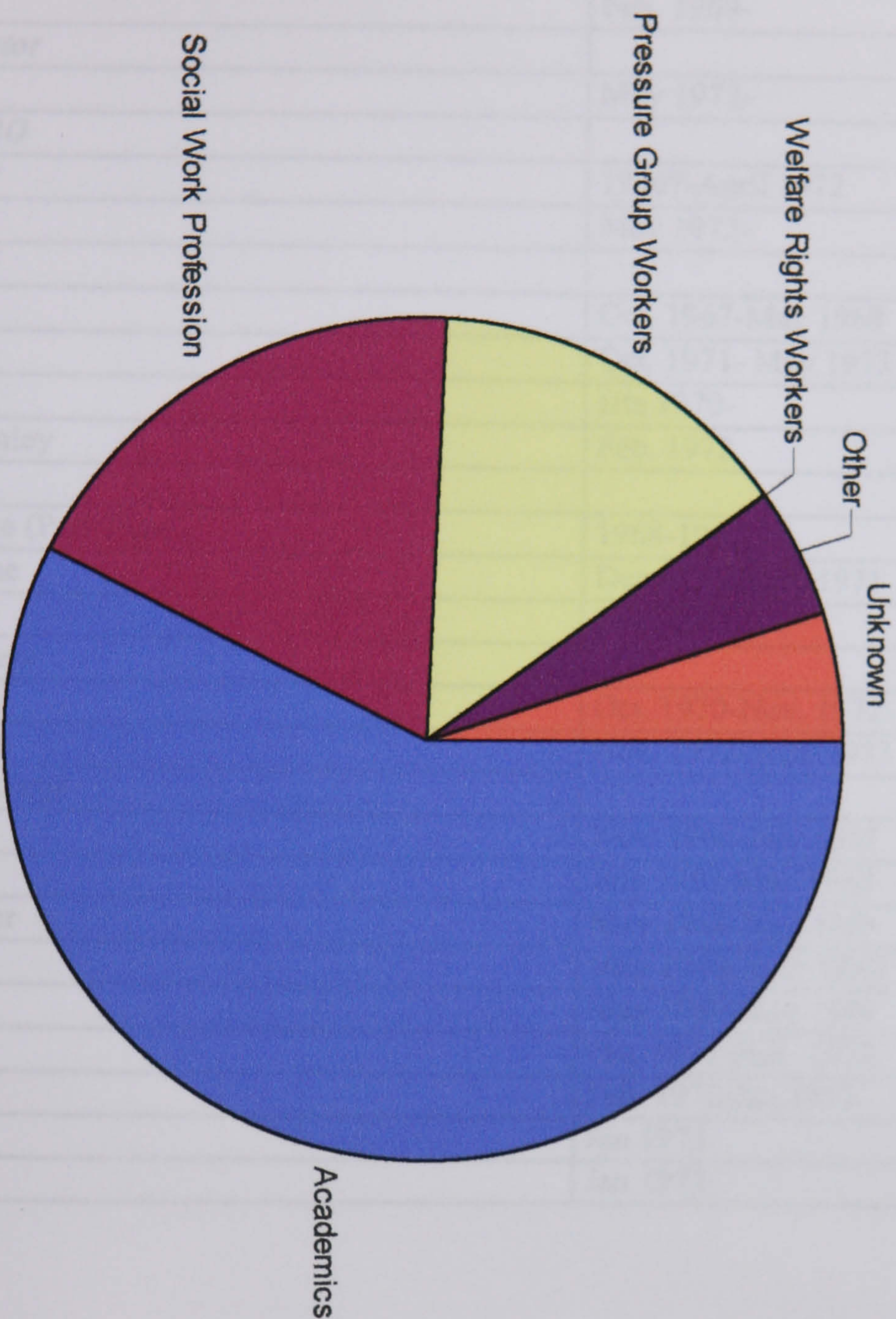
Chair

E.3.1 The Occupational Backgrounds of EC Members



Secretary/Director
Gillian Holroyde (Part Time)
Tony Lynes
Frank Field
Assistant Director
Barrie Smeeth
Director Of CRO
John Harvey
John West
Research Staff
Chris Purcell
Anna Jackson
Paul Lister
Virginia Bowney
Leanne
Assistant Director
David Anderson
Henry Hodge
CRO Assistant
Mary Morgan
Richard Dralov
Administrative
Glen Smith
John Spence
Alison Schinner
Jo Parker
Raylin Linckar
Judy Wade
Anna Davis
Roger Torode
Julie Jorrel

E.3.2 Percentage of Members Remaining on the EC for More than Two Years By Occupational Background



Source: CPAG EC minutes

E.4 *The Staff*

<i>Secretary/Director</i>	
Gillian Holroyde (Part Time)	Feb. 1966 - June 1966
Tony Lynes	Aug. 1966- Feb. 1969
Frank Field	Feb. 1969-
<i>Assistant Director</i>	
Jane Streather	May 1972-
<i>Director Of CRO</i>	
Audrey Harvey	1970?-April 1972
Stuart Weir	May 1972-
<i>Research Staff</i>	
Chris Purcell	Oct. 1967-May 1968
Robin Simpson	Oct. 1971- May 1973
Ruth Lister	late 1970-
Virginia Bottomley	Feb. 1972
<i>Lawyers</i>	
Rosalind Brooke (Part Time)	1968-1971
David Ardizzone	Dec.1970-Sept. 1971
Henry Hodge	Dec. 1971
<i>CRO Interviewers</i>	
Mary Morgen	Oct. 1970-Nov. 1972
Richard Drabble	Nov. 1972-Sept. 1973
<i>Administrative Staff</i>	
Olea Smith	Nov. 1966-July 1967
Anne Spinney	July 1967-May 1968
Abigail Schirmer	May 1968-May 1969
Jo Parker	May 1968-Nov. 1970
Phyllis Linekar	May 1969-May 1971
Judy Wade	Oct. 1971-Nov. 1972
Anne Davis	Feb. 1972-Jan 1973
Roger Torode	Jan 1973-
Jane Jessel	Jan 1973-

E.5 Membership Statistics

E.5.1 Membership 1966-1973

<u>Year/Month</u>	<u>Numbers</u> inclusive of both tiers of membership
End of Dec. 1966	454
3 March 1967	567
10 July 1968	1358
30 Dec 1968	1493
25 Sept 1971	2050
21 Dec 1973	2300
Two tier scheme	
25 Sept 1971	600
21 Dec 1973	1601

E5.2 Growth Rates of Membership

<u>Between:</u>	<u>Percentage of growth per month</u>
End of Dec.1966 -3 March 1967	0.62
3 March 1967-10 July 1968	0.15
10 July 1968-30 Dec 1968	0.18
30 Dec 1968-25 Sept 1971	0.04
25 Sept 1971-21 Dec 1973	0.04

E.6 Branches

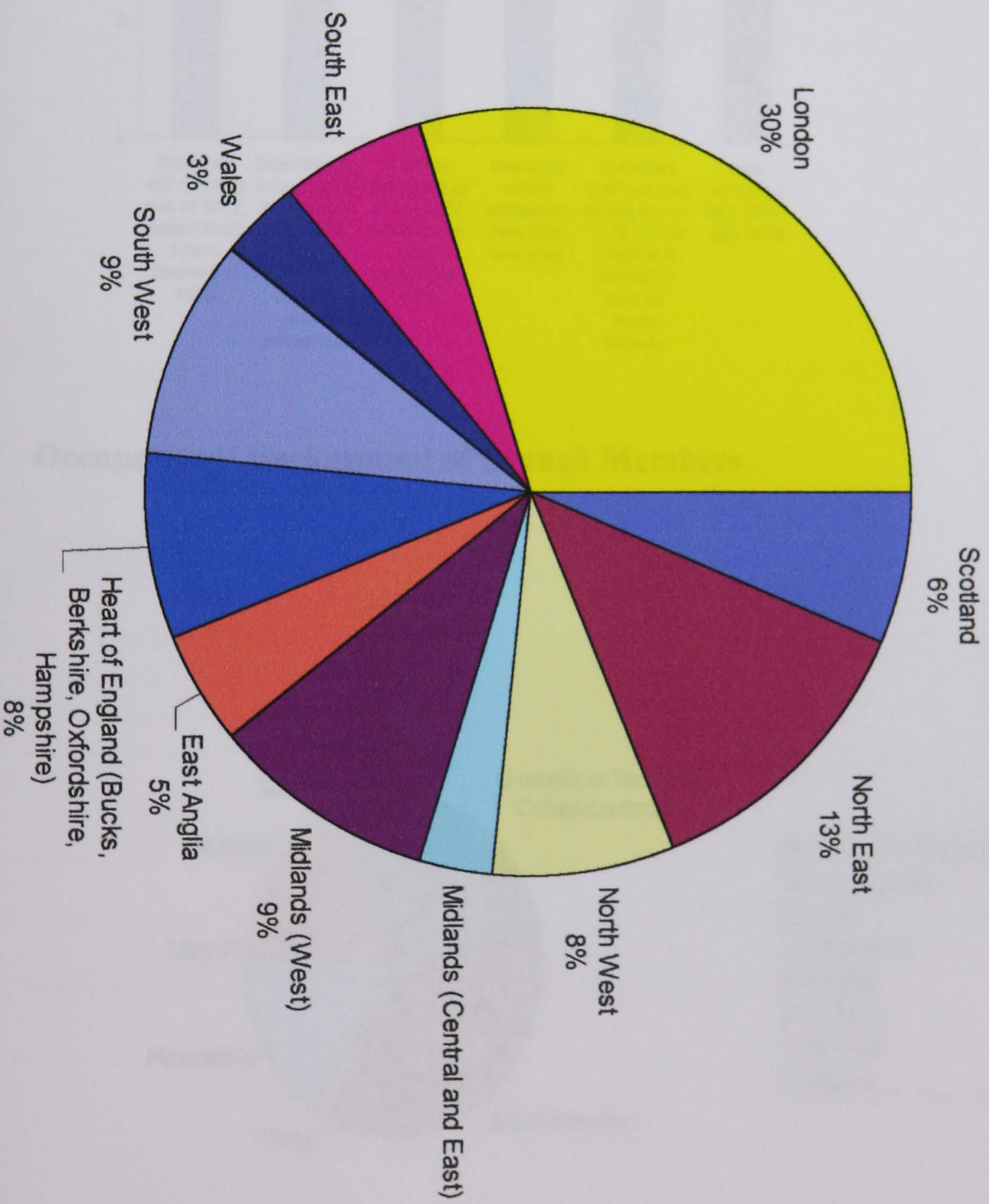
E.6.1.1 All CPAG Branches 1966-1973

	<u>Established</u>	<u>University based?</u>	<u>Area of Country</u>
1. Scottish Poverty Action Group	Oct 1967		
2. Northern Ireland Child Poverty Action Group	1968		
3. Aberdeen	July 1968	y	Scotland
4. Banbury	Jan 1973	n	heart
5. Birmingham	Aug. 1966 (But Was Ad Hoc)	y	West Midlands
6. Bradford	C. 1969-70	n	North East
7. Brighton	1971-Early 1972	n	South east
8. Bristol	Jan 1971	y	South west
9. Buckinghamshire	1969	n	Heart
10. Buckinghamshire North	1971-2	n	Heart
11. Cambridge	Nov 1970	y	East Anglia
12. Camden	1971-2	n	London
13. Chelmsford	Jan 1973	n	London area
14. Clydeside	July 1968	y	Scotland
15. Colchester	c.1971	y	South East
16. Coventry	Nov 1970	y	West midlands
17. Edinburgh	1969	y	Scotland
18. Exeter	Nov 1970	y	South west
19. Greenwich	C. Early 1971	n	London
20. Hackney	C. Early 1971	n	London
21. Harlow	1971-2	n	London area
22. Haringey	C.1971-Early 1972	n	London
23. Harrow	C.1971-Early 1972	n	London
24. Hatfield	Jan 1973	n	London
25. Hemel Hempstead	Sept 1970	n	London
26. Hornsea	Nov 1970	n	North east
27. Hounslow	Sept 1970	n	London
28. Hull	1968	y	North east
29. Ipswich	C.1971-Early 1972	n	East Anglia
30. Islington	Sept 1970	n	London
31. Leeds	July 1968	y	North East
32. London North West	C.1968	n	London
33. Leicester	C.1969-70	y	Midlands
34. Lewisham	C.1971-Early 1972	n	London
35. Manchester	Aug. 1967	y	North West
36. Merseyside	March 1967	y	North west
37. Newham	Nov 1971	n	London
38. Newton Abbot	Sept 1970	n	South west
39. North Devon	New Dec 1972	n	South west
40. North Staffordshire	C. 1971	n	West Midlands
41. Norwich	C.1968	y	East Anglia
42. Nottingham	C.1968	y	Midlands
43. Oxford	C.1968	y	Heart
44. Peterborough	Sept 1970	n	East Anglia
45. Preston	C.1971	n	North West
46. Rochdale	Jan 1973	n	North west
47. Sevenoaks	Jan 1973	n	London
48. Sheffield	July 1968	y	North east

49. Stirling	C.1971	y	Scotland
50. Stoke	C.1971-Early 1972	n	West Midlands
51. Southend	Sept 1970	n	South East
52. South Hants	C.1968	y	heart
53. Southwark	C.1969	n	London
54. South West Wales	C.1968	n	Wales
55. South Wiltshire	C. 1971	n	South west
56. Swansea	C.1971	y	Wales
57. Swindon	C.1971	n	South West
58. Tunbridge Wells	Nov 1970	n	South East
59. Tyneside	C.1969	y	North East
60. Wandsworth	May 1971	n	London
61. Warwick	C.1971-Early 1972	y	West Midlands
62. West Cheshire	April 1969	n	North West
63. Westminster	Nov 1970	n	London
64. Wolverhampton	c.1971-early 1972	n	West Midlands
65. Witham	Jan 1973	n	London area
66. York	July 1968	y	North east

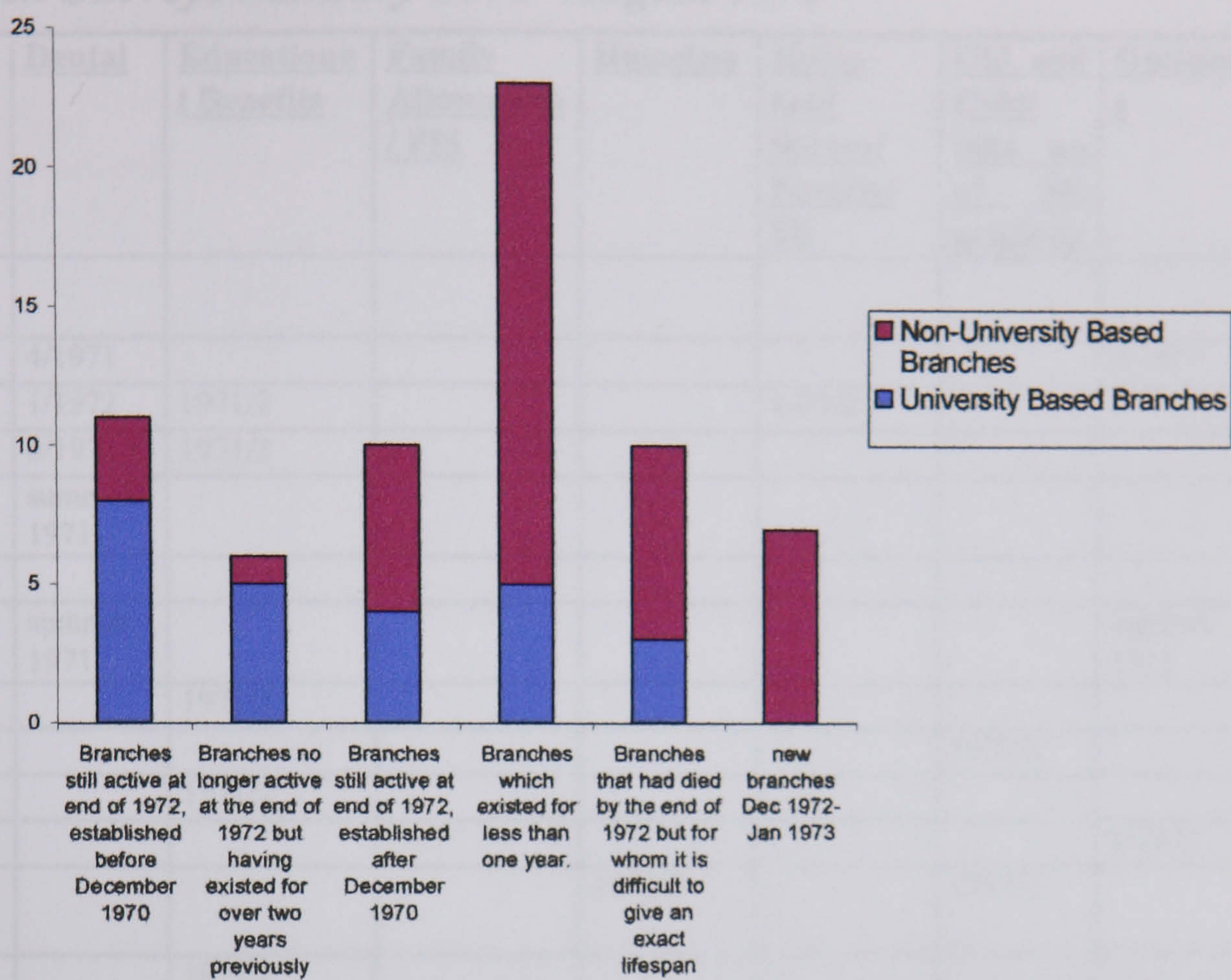
*numbers 21 onwards are new branches

E.6.1.2 The Regional Distribution of Branches 1966-1974+

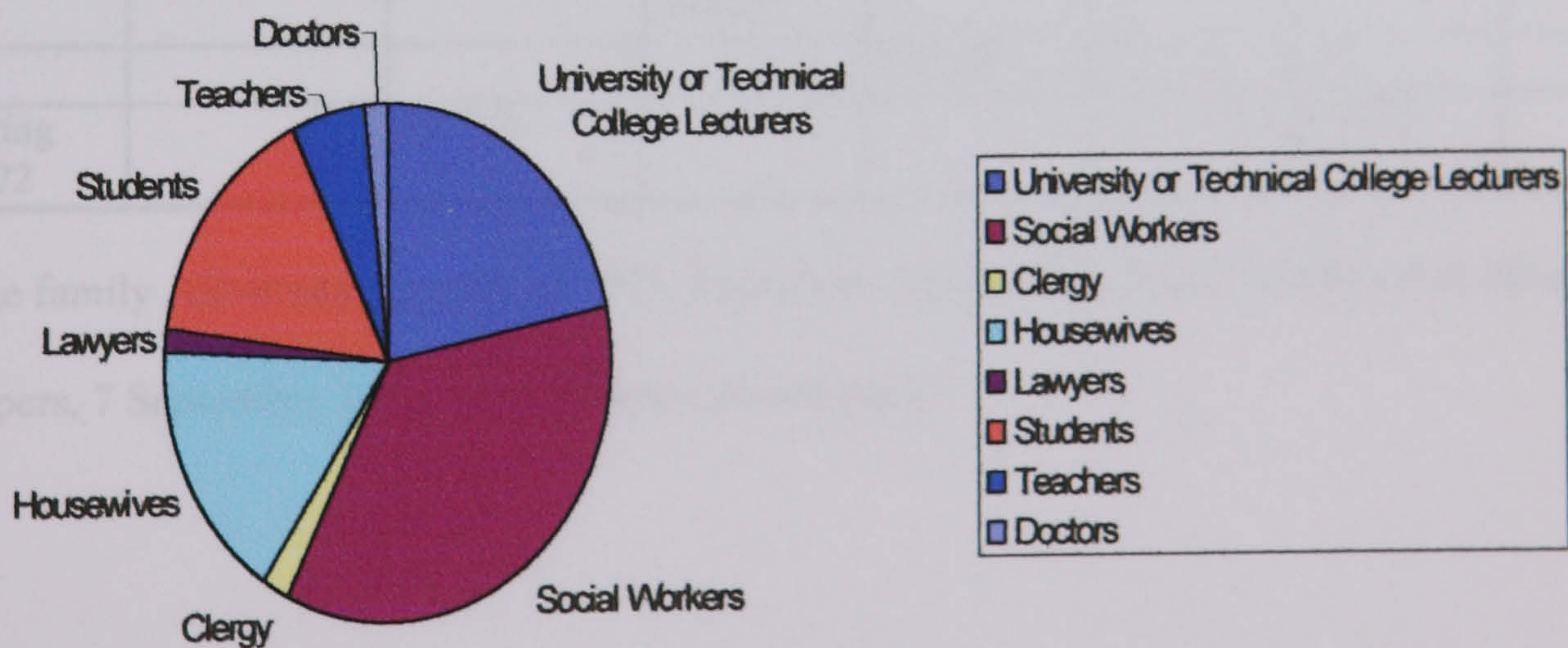


E.6.2 Branch Longevity

E.6.4 Branch Surveys January 1971- August 1972*



E6.3 Occupational Background of Branch Members



Source: Worsfold (1971) p.309

E.6.4 Branch Surveys January 1971- August 1972*

<u>Branch</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Educational Benefits</u>	<u>Family Allowances / FIS</u>	<u>Homeless</u>	<u>Household Survey/ Poverty/ SB</u>	<u>Old and Cold/ take up of SB pensions</u>	<u>Opticians</u>	<u>Post Office</u>
Birmingham								summer 1972 ¹
Bristol	4/1971						4/1971	
Cambridge	1/1972	1971/2			1971/2			2/1972
Camden	8/1972	1971/2						
Clydeside	summer 1971							
Colchester								7/1972
Exeter	summer 1971						summer 1971	
Greenwich		1971/2						5 1972
Hackney						1971/2		
Haringey		1971/2						
Hull							8/1972	
Islington (Welfare rights)				1971/2		1971/2		
Manchester		1971/2						
Norwich	9/1971						11/1971	11/ 1972
Peterborough	summer 1971		1971/2		1971/2		summer 1971	4/1972
Preston						1971/2		
Sheffield	10/1971							
Southwark							spring 1972	summer 1972
Stirling					1971/2			1971
Wandsworth				1971/2				
Westminster				1971/2				
Wolverhampton					1971/2			
York	spring 1972		1971/2				c.1972	

* Does not include the family Allowances Survey of 1972 which was organised by the CPAG national office

Branches Council Papers, 7 September 1972, Veit Wilson’s private papers

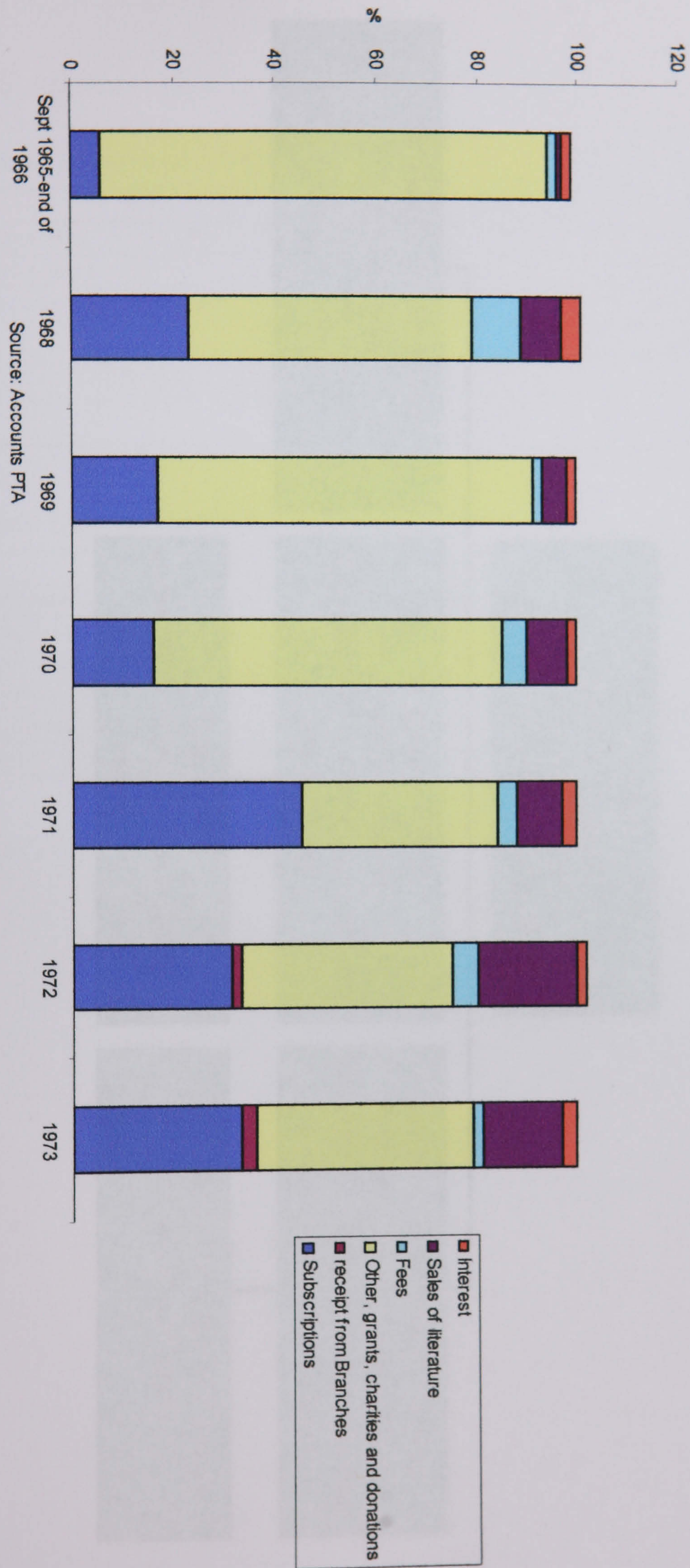
¹ Birmingham branch was basically dead from 1970 onwards but it appears to have temporarily revived to complete this one short survey.

E.7 Finance

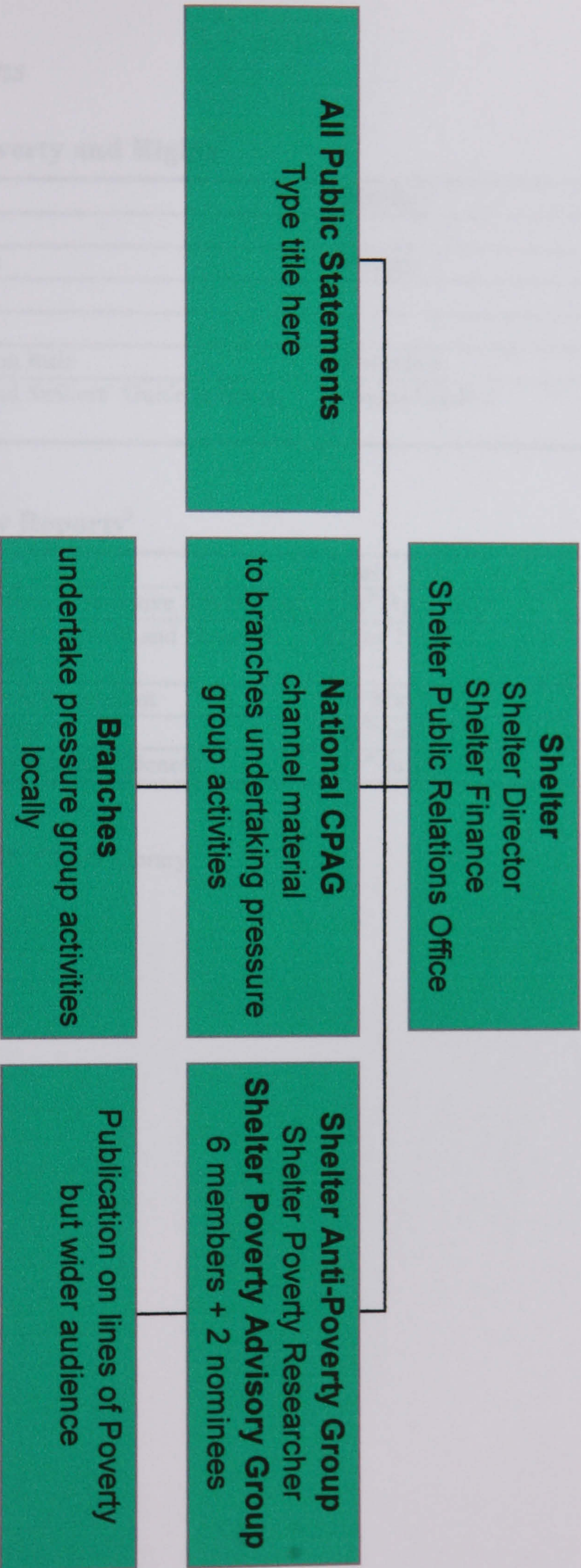
E.7.1 CPAG Turnover 1965-1973

	Sept 1965-end of 1966	End of 1968	End of 1969	End of 1970	End of 1971	End of 1972	End of 1973
Fixed assets	N.A.	£103	£394	£499	£754	£1261	£1716
Investments	N.A.	£1298	£1195	£1651	N.A	£5348	£5348
Net Accumulative Assets	N.A.	£2649	£4734	£8592	£10306	£8740	£17442
Total Income	£2436	£4754	£7813	£8594	£12134	£18657	£27988
Total Expenditure	£1603	£4992	£6066	£7972	£11910	£17753	£17861
Surplus of income over expenditure	£2081	£-238	£1747	£622	£5199	£6103	£16915
Legal Department							
surplus of income over expenditure	-	-	£388	£2504	£4489	£703	-£420
CRO							
Surplus of Income over expenditure	-	-	-	-£1383	-£1099	-£-263	-£754

E7.2 Sources of Income 1965-1973



E.8 Structure After Proposed Merger with Shelter



Appendices F

F.1 Publications

F.1.1 Leaflets: Poverty and Rights²

Leaflet	Number	Year
Guide to the Wage Stop	-	1967
Low Wage Employment	Poverty 1	c.1969
Guide to SB Appeals		c.1970
Guide to Wage Stop		c.1970
Guide on the Cohabitation Rule	Poverty 4	c.1971
Unemployed Workers and Strikers' Guide to Social Security	Rights Guide 1	c.1973

F.1.2 Welfare Law Reports³

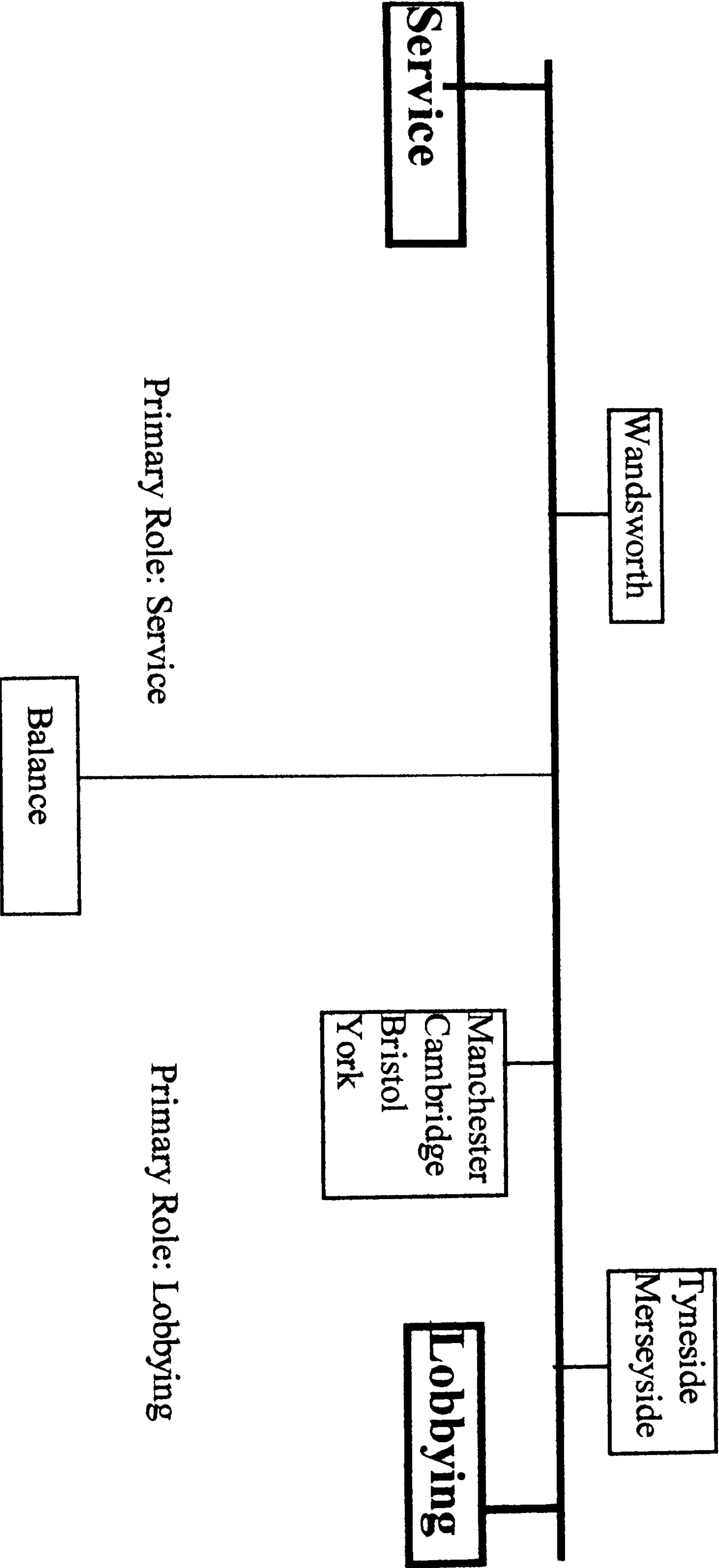
Report	Date	Author
Redundancy Payments When Alternative Job Offered	28 th April 1972	H. Hodge
Cohabitation: Supplementary Benefit and National Insurance Appeal Tribunals	May 1972	R. Lister
Work Not Inconsistent with Retirement	9 th May 1972	H. Hodge
Definition of A Householder	11 th July 1972	R. Simpson
Rental Purchase and Supplementary Benefit	11 th July 1972	R. Simpson

Source: PTA, DBP, JVWP, CPAG Library

² Note this is by no means a complete set of leaflets issued. However these are the leaflets that have survived in the various archives (Leaflets from CPAG Library).

³ This is probably the full set as the same set was found in two separate archives (Townsend Archive, Bull's Private papers).

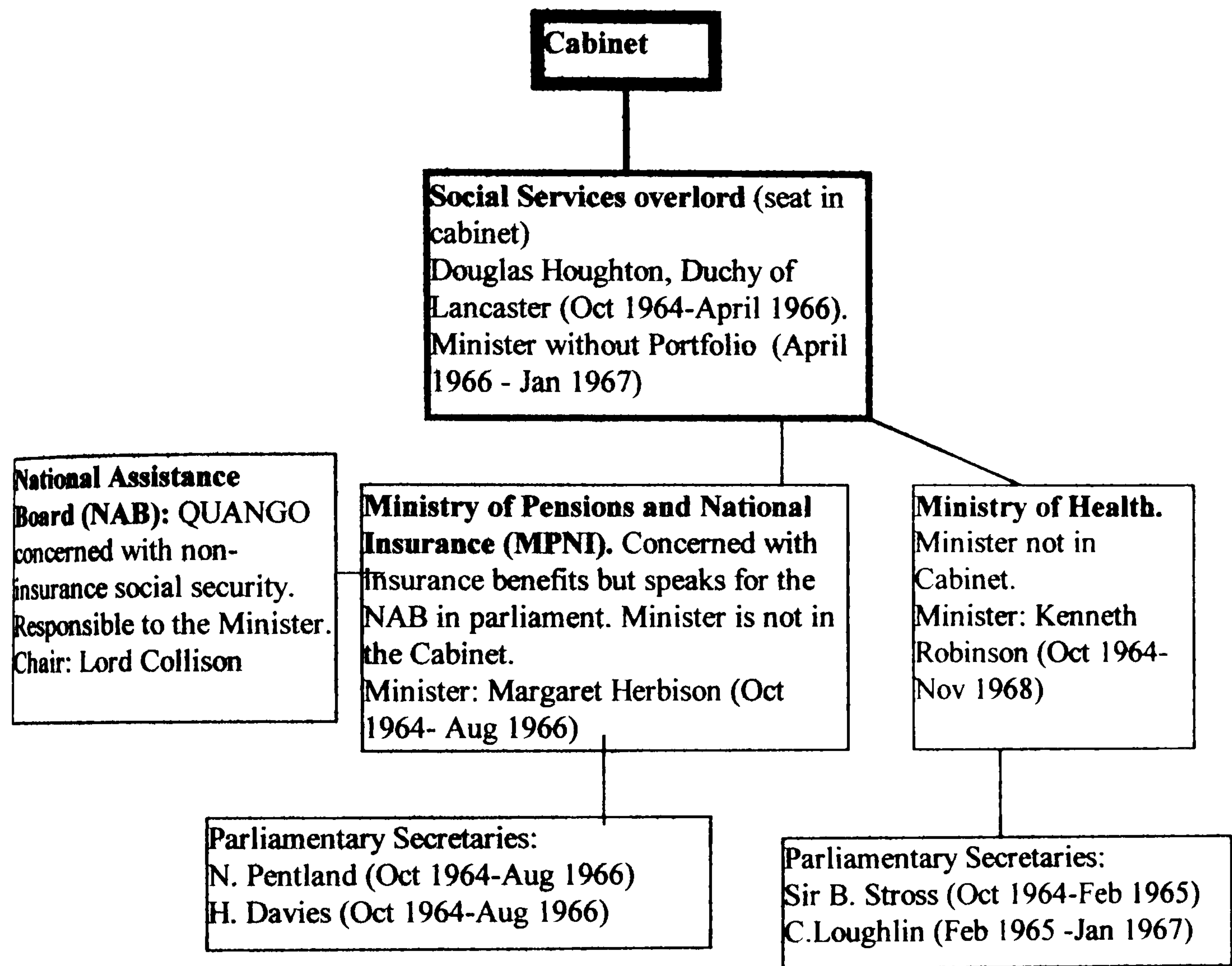
F.2 Branches Positions on the Lobbying/Services Continuum



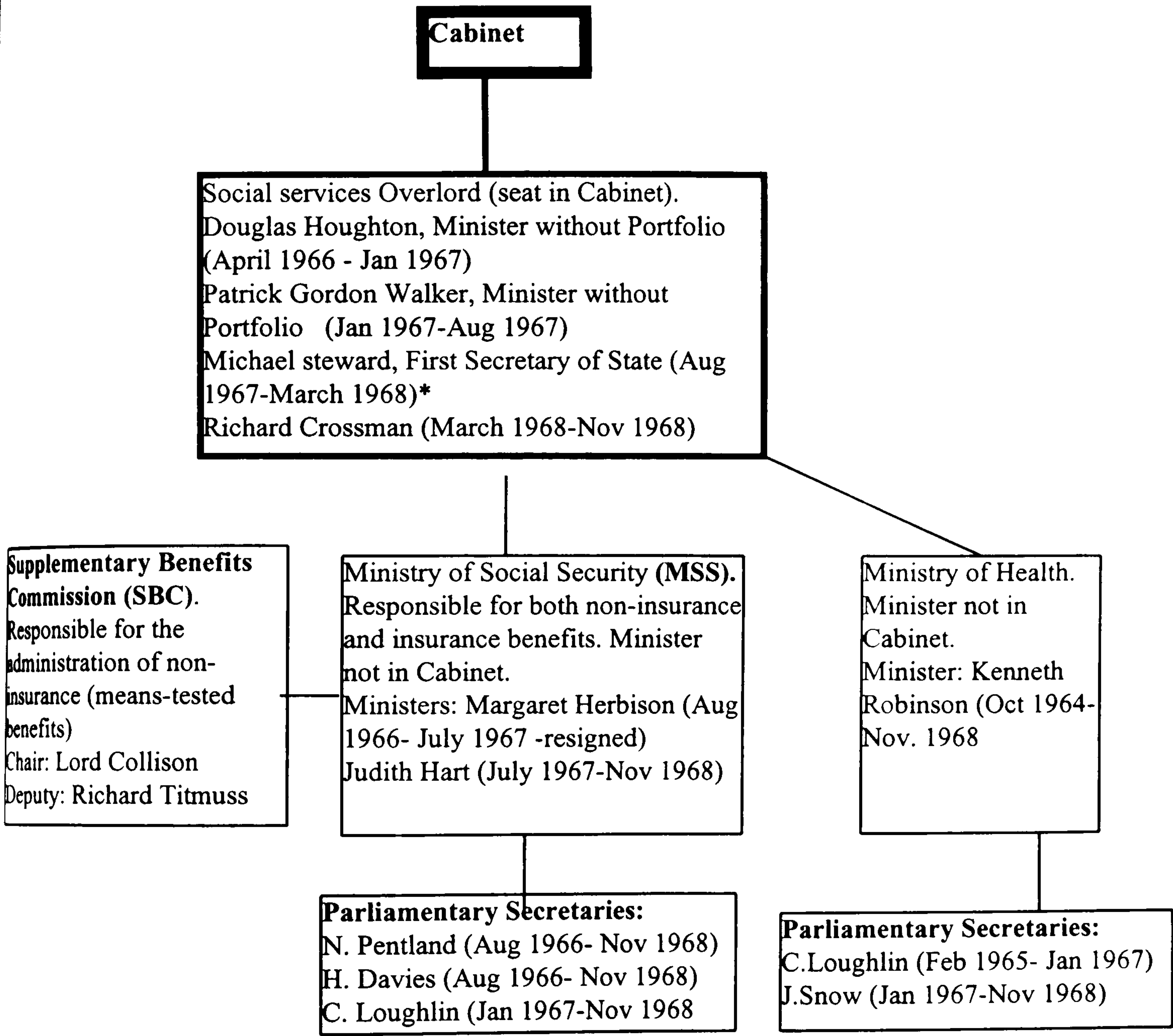
Appendices G

G.1 The “Social Security” Ministries 1965-74

G.1.1 The Situation in 1965: Fragmented Social Security

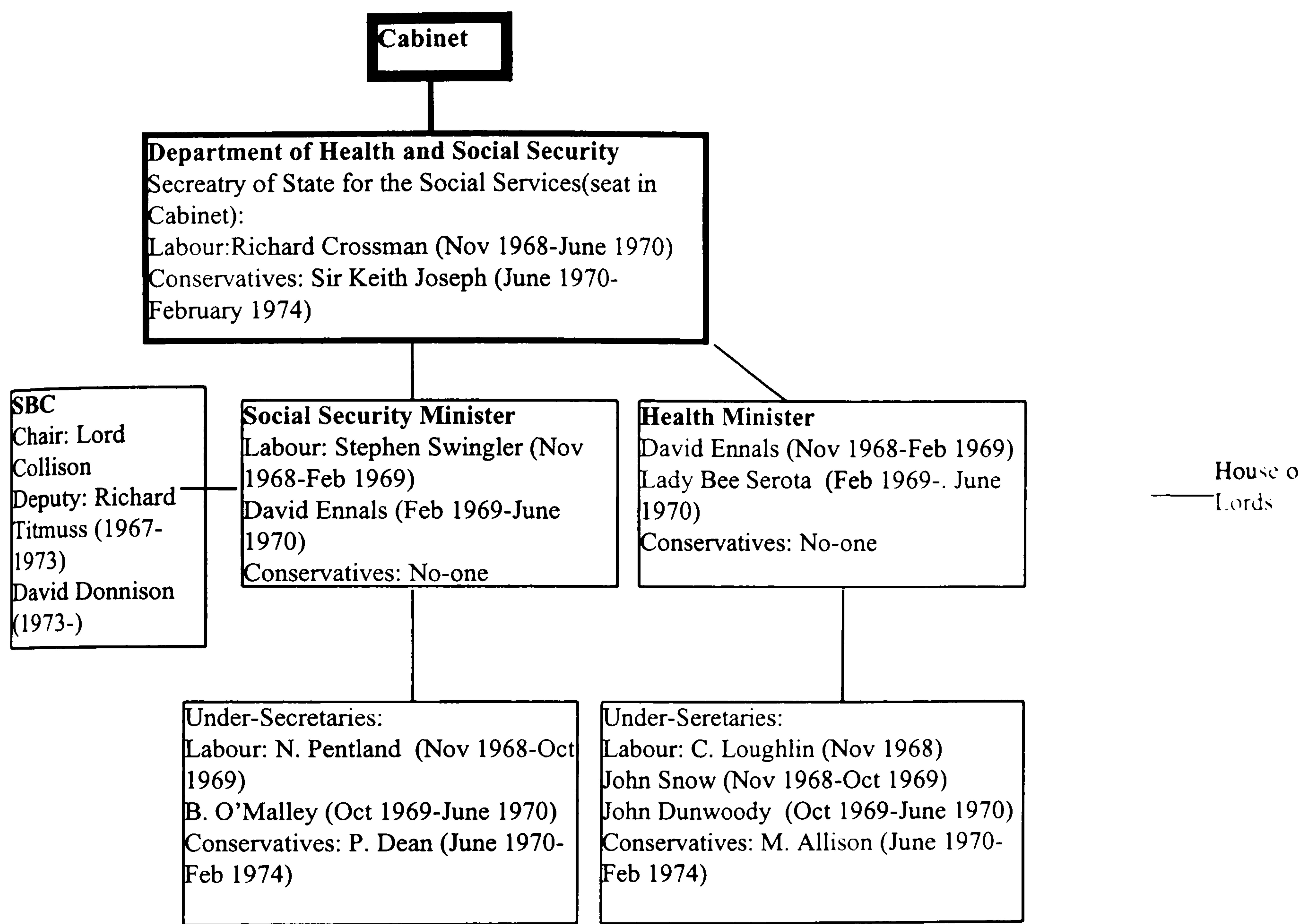


G.1.2 The Ministries of Health and Social Security

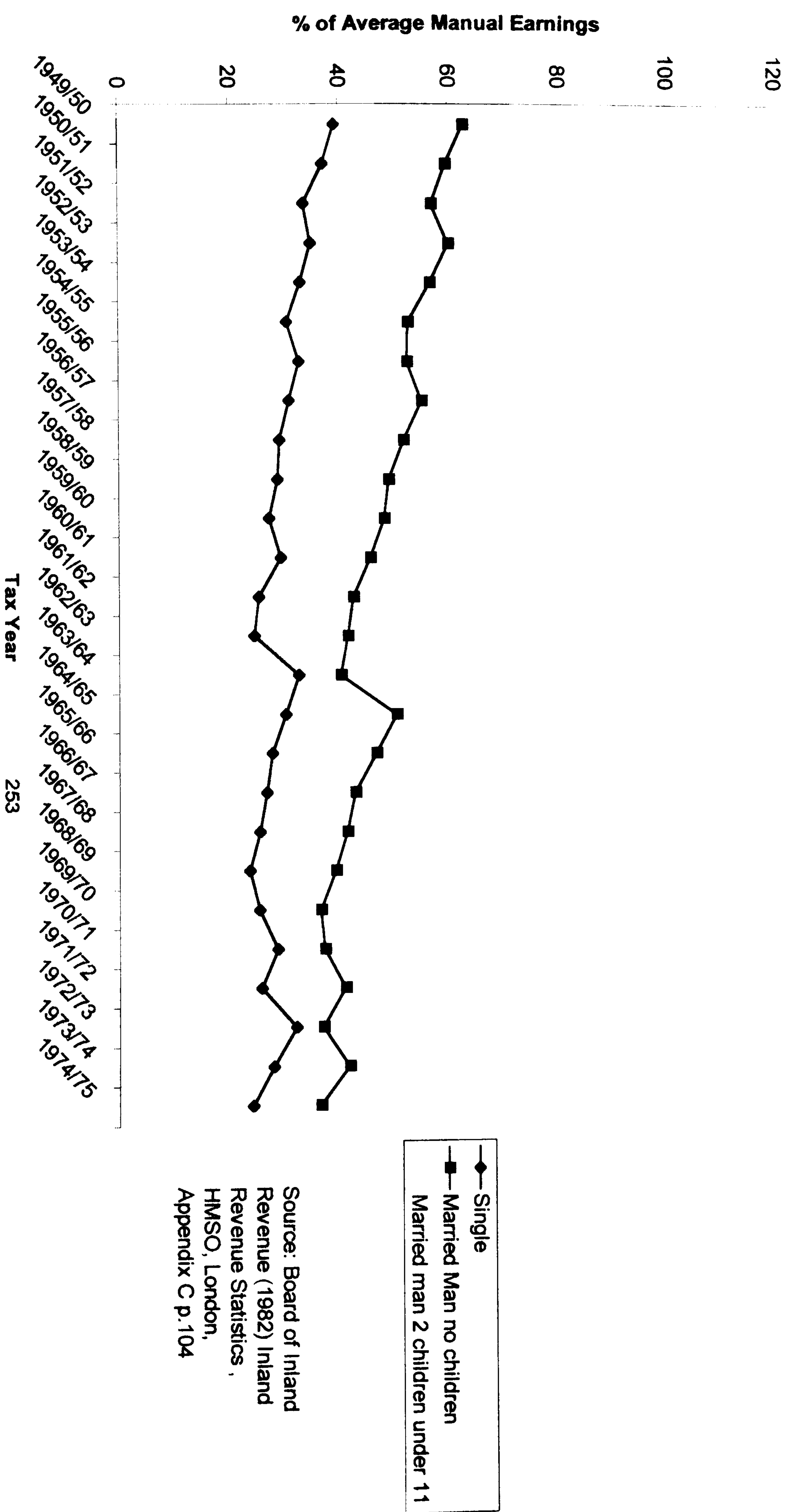


* Had been First Secretary since Oct 64 but had been linked then to the Ministry of Economic Affairs

G.1.3 The Department of Health and Social Secuity November 1968-February 1974



G.2: *The Tax Threshold as a Percentage of Average Manual Earnings 1949-1975*



G.3 The Supplementary Benefits Commission:

Chair:

Lord Runcorn (-1966)

Richard Hayward (1966-Sept 1969)

Lord Collison (Sept 1969-)

Deputy chair:

Percy Morris (-1966)

McAlister (1966-Dec 1967)

Richard Titmuss (Dec 1967-April 1973)

David Donnison (April 1973-)

Members:

Edwin Bayliss(-1966)

McAlister (- then depputy chair until Dec 1967)

Harry Pigott (-1966)

Barbara Rodgers (July 1965-)

Hamburger (1966-)

Simson (1966-)

Marsh (1966-)

Griffin (1966-)

Carmichael (1968-)

a: Until 1966 it was the National Assistance Board

b: There was no report of the SBC in 1966 because of the administrative changes.

Appendices H

H.1 The Political Parties: CPAG Resolutions Submitted by CLPs for 1973 Conference

	Resolutions	Resolution repetitions	Amendments	Total Number of resolutions in that category.		
				resol.	resol. repeats	Amend.
Minimum wage	4 + contact on another resolution	2	2 + 1 repeat	11	2	5
Social Services	Contact on one resolution			2	0	0
Social Security	6	1	0	12	2	2
Taxation	2	1	1	13 (2 on tax credits)	1	3 (1 on tax credits)
Family Allowances	7	0	2 +1 repeat	7	0	3
Elimination of poverty	1	1	0	1	1	0
Housing	2	0	0	38	-	-
Educational benefits	3	0	0	20	-	-

Source: Weir and Streather 1973 p.2-4

H.2 Parliament

H.2.1 CPAG Sympathisers in the House of Commons c.1971

Inactive CPAG MPs	MPs Who had been active but asked very few questions by 1971/2	Active MPs asking Questions
1. "Archer (Jeffrey)"	1. "Fortescue"	1. "Allaun"
2. "Atkinson (Norman)"	2. "Jeger"	2. "Archer (Peter)"
3. "Barnett"		3. "Barnes"
4. "Bidwell"		4. "Carter"
5. "Brown"		5. "Kinnock"
6. "Callaghan"		6. "Lestor"
7. "Crosland"		7. "McNamara"
8. "Crossman"		8. "Marks"
9. "Cunningham"		9. "Meacher"
10. "Darling"		10. "O'Malley"
11. "Dell"		11. "Pardoe"
12. "Du Cann"		12. "Steel"
13. "Dunnett"		13. "Vickers"
14. "Foot"		14. "Ward (Irene)"
15. "Fraser"		15. "Rhys Williams"
16. "Golding"		
17. "Grant"		
18. "Grimmond"		
19. "Hart"		
20. "Houghton"		
21. "Heffer"		
22. "Judd"		
23. Leonard"		
24. "Mackintosh"		
25. "Mikardo"		
26. "Pike"		
27. "Radice"		
28. "Peter Shaw"		
29. "Whitehead"		
29 MPs	2 MPs	15 MPs

Source: A contemporary list (DBP)

H.2.2 Types of Questions asked in Parliament on CPAG Issues 1st August 1966-28 February 1974

H.2.2.1 The Number of Questions of Different Types Adjusted

	Number of Questions divided by number of days in period ^a		
	Written	Oral	Total
Lynes 1.8.66-14.2.69	0.12	0.23	0.35
Field (Labour government) 15.2.69-18.6.70	0.19	0.16	0.35
Field (Conservative government) 19.6.70-28.2.74	0.50	0.13	0.63

Source: Hansard

H.2.2.2 *A Breakdown between Written and Oral Questions*

	Written	Oral	Total
Lynes 1.8.66-14.2.69	111	211	322
Field (Labour government) 15.2.69-18.6.70	91	76	167
Field (Conservative government)19.6.70-28.2.74	659	165	824

Source: Hansard

H.2.2.3 *The Ratios Between Written and Oral Questions*

	Ratios between Written and Oral Questions	
	Written:Oral	Oral:Written
Lynes 1.8.66-14.2.69	0.5:1	1.9:1
Field (Labour government) 15.2.69-18.6.70	1.2:1	0.8:1
Field (Conservative government)19.6.70-28.2.74	4.0:1	0.3:1

Source: Taken from Hansard

H.2.2.4 *The Health and Social Services Back-Bench Committee (HSSC) of the Conservative Party*

Year	Chair	Honorary Secretaries
1966-7	Mervyn Pike	Paul Dean Marcus Worsley
1967-70	Lord Balniel	Paul Dean Marcus Worsley
1970	Meryvn Pike	Jill Knight (vice Chair) Sir Brandon Rhys Williams (Honorary Secretray)

Source: CPA

I Appendices I

Stories included in the CPAG’s Press Releases

	Total number of press releases	Number covered by one of the three papers	
CPAG as an organisation	4	2	50%
Stories about poverty (poverty, family allowances, FIS, means testing and other benefits but not those related to housing	46	15	33%
	3	1	33%
Stories about Employment issues (including strikes and wage stop)	7	1	14%
Stories about Cohabitation	4	3	75%
Stories about Housing (including rent and rate rebates)	21	7	34%
Stories about SBC, welfare rights and the legal system	25	7	28%
Stories about Northern Ireland	5	0	0
Relations with the Government of the day	14	3	21%
Tax credits	1	0	0
Totals	130	41	32%

Appendix J

The CPAG's Contact with the Trade Unions

Date	Discussion, Contact, Action
July 17 1965	In the long list of organisations that could be contacted in the agenda for July 1965 the trade unions were included (agenda for 15 July 1965, File 1, box 65, PTA). No further action was taken
July 29 1966	Tony Lynes submitted his plans as secretary in July 1966 he said that he would like to organise meeting for the party conferences and for the TUC conference although he recognised that it might be difficult to plan for the TUC conference which was only just over a month away (Letter from Tony Lynes to Fred Philp 29 July 1966).
March 30 1967	In March 1967 it was agreed that information about the wage stop should not only be sent to social workers but also to trade unions as well (Minutes 30 March 1967, file 1 box 65).
June 1967	The Secretary's report mentions the setting up of sub-committees. Amongst these sub-committees is a trade unions sub-committee consisting of Robert Milsom of the TUC, Giles Radice of NUGMW and Norman Willis of TGWU. Nothing else is mentioned of this sub-committee which appears to have come to nothing (Secretary's report on sub-committees, June 1967, Harriet Wilson's private papers)
July 7 1967	Tony Lynes writes to George Woodcock (General Secretary of the GC) to ask for funding for the CPAG (Tony Lynes to George Woodcock, Gen. Sec. 12 July 1967, MSS/292B/823/4, MRC). George Woodcock replies that the TUC are raising the issue of family allowances with the government and have done so with previous governments. However the TUC does not normally contribute to groups campaigning for increased social security benefits. (George Woodcock to Tony Lynes 21 July 1967 MSS/292B/823/4, MRC).
Summer 1967	Frank Cousins, a former general secretary of the TGWU wrote in <i>Poverty</i> arguing that although the unions argued for a minimum wage to combat poverty and the CPAG higher family allowances, this made the work complementary and not competitive. He argued that family allowances were necessary because wages should give the worker a good standard of living but that the size of the family is an additional matter. Family allowances therefore had a key role (Frank Cousins, <i>Poverty</i> issue 3, Summer 1967, p.6).
October 1967	This was done and the leaflet about the wage stop along with the supplement from <i>Poverty</i> was sent to local trades' councils. The trades councils were told that they could purchase the leaflets from the CPAG for 5s per hundred and that Tony Lynes would be happy to write for their journal or provide a speaker for their meetings (Tony Lynes to Gloucester trades Council 29 October 1967, MSS 292B 825/4, MRC). The CPAG had obviously not been very successful previous to this in raising awareness of their organisation amongst local trades councils because the chair wrote to General Secretary of the TUC asking "I wonder if you can comment and advise who are the Child poverty Action Group?" (Gloucestershire trades council to Gen. Sec. of TUC 5 November 1967).
Winter 1967	Tony Lynes argues that the TUC's recent request to the government for another 10s to be added to family allowances (it would make family allowances 25s for the second child and 27s for the third and subsequent children). The fact that the TUC, also advocated claw-back is seen as a victory (Tony Lynes, <i>Poverty</i> 5, Winter 1967, p.14).
24 April 1968	Rosemary Vear gives her paper <i>Local Action On Poverty</i> at the AGM. She urges branches to contact local trade unionists who have been

	neglected by the CPAG.
24 May 1968	There is a discussion about greater links with trade unionists. It is suggested that a leaflet should be prepared aimed at trade unionists explaining theirs and the CPAG's common interests. A memo should be sent to all branches on how to contact their local trades' councils and how to encourage local trade union branches to affiliate to the CPAG. That a list of trades' councils should be used to contact them directly and invite them to affiliate nationally to the CPAG. That information should be gathered on the Annual Conference of Trades Councils (EC minutes 24 May 1968, File 2 box 65, PTA, also for discussion see McCarthy 1986 p.179-180)
29 July 1968	Appeals Committee report on the fact that they have been asked by the EC to encourage trades council affiliation. However they had at this time only approached groups they thought would be most interested: Children's Officers, Child care officers, Medical officers of Health, Welfare officers, Housing managers, as well as women's and Catholic organisations (Appeals Committee 29 July 1968 File 2 box 65, PTA).
Summer 1968	John Hughes writes an article in Poverty about how the earnings gap had widened. He argued that the TUC was in favour of there being two wage ceilings 3 1/2% for all workers and 5% for the low paid, although the Government wanted just 3 1/2% for all workers. The article went on to argue for a minimum wage.
13 September 1968	It is reported to the EC that the TUC have refused an invitation to attend the conference on Family Allowances (EC minutes, 13 September File 2 box 65, PTA).
4 October 1968	Lawrence Daly who was a friend of CPAG was likely to become general Secretary of the National Union of Miners (NUM). Tony Lynes believed there was a possibility that CPAG might be able to get funding off the NUM for research into the social effects of pit closures
October 1968	At the October conference the CPAG's relationship with the trade unions is on of the topics discussed and it is agreed that there should be a statement of policy for the Trades unions on wages policy and social security in particular family allowances (EC minutes 20 October 1968, File 2 box 65, PTA)
20 February 1969	The Appeals Committee again suggests that local branches try to get local trades unions and political parties to affiliate (20 February 1969, File 3 box 65, PTA).
Autumn/Winter 1969	Hilary Land writes an article in Poverty outlining the TUC's important role in the introduction of family allowances. She argues that the TUC was "vital" in 1942 and mirroring Sir John Walley asks "can the CPAG afford to neglect [the TUC]?" (Poverty no. 12/13, Autumn/Winter 1969, p.9)
9 December 1969	Work-shy leaflet is sent to the trade unions and to the three political parties. The pamphlet <i>Low Wage Employment</i> received good coverage from the press and an order form was circulated to all trades councils and labour parties (December 9 1969, File 3 box 65, PTA).
January 1970	A memorandum is sent to the TUC. It reminds the TUC of its 1967 representation to the government urging a 10s increase in family allowances, its rejection of the means test and its support for claw-back. The memorandum then discusses the widening gap between the poor and other groups, the rise in prices, the increase in school meals and welfare milk and the reintroduction of prescription charges. It then argues that family allowances are important as 1) most effective way of relating family income to family needs 2) Low paid have benefited least from government's incomes and social policies 3) Substantial family allowances are the best antidote to the work-shy 4) The Prime minister promised to shield the poor from devaluation but only gave 3s 5) Part of the 1967 deal for abolishing family poverty was

	<p>to give free school meals to the fourth and subsequent children. This has now been withdrawn. 6) Our family allowances are one of the lowest in Europe.</p> <p>The memorandum went on to say that the CPAG wanted a 35s family allowance for all children (including the first) The cost with claw-back would be £115m and only £40m if the first child was excluded. Like the GC the CPAG advocates claw-back because it minimises the cost of the reform and whilst strengthening an universal benefit it allocates the increase selectively. It finishes by reminding the GC that in his 1968 devaluation speech the chancellor said he hoped to extend claw-back to the whole of the family allowance in his 1969 budget. The CPAG point out that this never happened (A Memorandum from the Child poverty Action group to the TUC on the Urgent need to increase family allowances January 1970, Professor Veit Wilson's private papers). In the covering letter to the memorandum to the TUC, members expressed pleasure at the group's increasing ties with the trade union movement (EC minutes 7 February 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA)</p>
February 1970	Margaret Herbison is the principle signatory on a fund raising letter to the trade unions (McCarthy 1986 p.182). The bid does not appear to have been successful.
April 1970	A letter is sent to the Prime minister from the CPAG and a number of Trade union leaders, which altogether represented three and half million workers (EC minutes 18 April 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA).
18 April 1970	Sir John Walley urges the CPAG to tackle the TUC and women's organisations to gain support for its work (Report of the AGM 18 April 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA).
19 April 1970	At the day conference, which followed the AGM, David Ennals was the first speaker followed by Giles Radice of the GMWU who argued for a statutory minimum wage.
24 September 1970	Meeting with research officers from a number of trade unions research officers. The aim of which was to "forge closer links between the group and unions" (Director's report 18 September 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA). The unions were taking information from the group for their own journals. It was hoped that after the December New earnings Survey that the director will be able to report back on how the Trade unions and CPAG will co-operate on following it up. It was also hoped that the trade unions might purchase bulk copies of the poverty leaflets (EC minutes 26 September 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA). The director attributed credit for helping to arrange the meeting to Giles Radice and Nicholas Bosanquet (Director's report 18 September 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA).
26 September 1970	Ian Jordan offers to organise a fringe meeting for the group at the next TUC congress (EC minutes 26 September 1970 File 4 box 65, PTA). However it comes to nothing and the TUC advise against it (EC minutes 25 September 1971 File 5 box 65, PTA).
3 November 1970	Launch of a campaign to get the government „to think again about its new social policies". Jack Jones says that it "marked a significant development in collaboration between organisations concerned with social rights and with the interests of the low paid and the poor. There were representatives present from three trade unions (the National Union of Public employees, the Transport and general Workers Union and the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers). In addition there were representatives from nineteen social service pressure groups and representatives from the Social Workers of the Socialist medical Association and the British Association of Social Workers. Vic Feather the General Secretary of the TUC sent a message a support. This argued that wage increases alone could not deal with the problem of poverty due to dependence. The solution was "in using a battery of means which can be concentrated in the area of most need". This meant for the TUC a minimum earned income allowance with an increase in family

	allowances (to 30s including the first child) subject to claw-back. He then attacked the government's policies and argued that "only a two faced government could talk about "one nation" in this context, and the Child Poverty Action Group, in developing its protest has the best wishes of the whole trade union movement."(Press release 4 November 1970, Box 70, PTA)
Autumn/Winter 1970	Vic Feather, the General Secretary of the TUC's letter is published in <i>Poverty</i>
January 1971	Nicholas Bosanquet addresses an internal CPAG discussion about "How far is a wages policy necessary part of any strategy for dealing with family poverty? In this address he argued that lobby groups for the poor have to address general economic policy not just the specific policies for social security. Secondly that the debate on low pay has centred on methods of raising low pay and not considered the issue of employment." He concluded that we need changes in general economic policies. (Bosanquet Poverty no. 18, Spring 1971, p.2-6 for concise summary see McCarthy 1986 p.194).
March 1971	The Director talks about an open letter to trade Unions on how to overcome family poverty (Director's report March 1971 File 5 box 65, PTA).
June 1971	The report on the CPAG campaigns says that trade unionists have been involved in the campaign with the SBC about the work-shy (EC minutes 25 June 1971 File 5 box 65, PTA). It is agreed to attend the TUC congress and the Labour party Conference
22 September 1971	Meeting of CPAG and research staff from unions representing low paid workers including the NUTGW, USDAW and the TGWU. It was not a great success and Bosanquet described it as "an exploratory discussion which had no very immediate effect." (Bosanquet to McCarthy 3 April 1979, in McCarthy 1986 p.219).
3 December 1971	The publication in the New statesman of the "Poverty Trap" by Frank Field and David Piachaud. This article which argued that low paid workers with children were trapped into poverty by the means testing system. It argued that this meant that wage rises could result in very high rates marginal rates of taxation. As blasting the poor out of the trap could mean the need for pay rises of 40 to 50%, the authors suggested that a better solution would be for trade unions to make improvements in benefits part of the negotiations (Field and Piachaud 1971, The Poverty Trap, New Statesman 3 December 1971). The trade unions were unimpressed with this argument. Jack Jones of the TGWU pointed out what they were arguing was unrealistic (Jones, Wages and Social Security New Society 7 January 1971). Donnet and Lipsey of the GMWU concluded that the article demonstrated Field' and Piachaud's ignorance of collective bargaining. Union negotiators "do not negotiate directly with the government but with the employer" (Donnet and Lipsey, Tribune 24 December 1971 for full discussion see McCarthy 1986 p.201)
June 1972	Field concludes in a policy paper that the Trade Unions have a great deal of strength over a Labour Government (he gives the examples of the withdraw of <i>In the Place of Strife</i> and Callaghan's attempts to introduce FIS in 1967). He asks "how should we go about getting across our ideas to trade union leaders, as well as the rank and file." He also argues that the group should try and form contacts with friendly trade unionists such as Bill Simpson of the AUEW, who was also chair of the NEC of the Labour party Social, Policy Sub-Committee. In order to form the contacts with the trade unionists he suggests that the next member of staff employed should be a trade union liaison officer. Incredibly considering the trade union movement's refusal in the past to fund CPAG he argues that the trade union movement might pay the officer's salary. However this might have been a way of selling the idea

	without it seeming at first to cost CPAG anything (Policy paper, file 6, box 65, PTA). By 1974, CPAG had appointed its trade union liaison officer. However with her upper-middle class background and few contacts in the world of trade unionism she was a peculiar choice (McCarthy 1986 p.239) and was employed more for her media connections than her trade union ones (Weir interview 2 June 1999)
October 1972	Jane Streather and Stuart Weir attend the Labour party Conference and the TUC At the Labour party conference they are able to lobby a number of trade unionists and sale literature another stall (Report of the 1972 Conference, file 7 box 65, PTA).
1973	Jane Streather at CPAG sets up a branch of the TGWU for staff and staff at other London charities and voluntary organisations. Frank Field argues that this was intended to be an epicentre for social policy research within the TGWU, a hope that was never realised (Field 1982 p.62). Jane Streather argues that it made no difference at all to staff welfare either (Streather interview 23 February 1999).
October 1973	Jane Streather and Stuart Weir attend the Labour party Conference and the TUC At the Labour party conference they are able to lobby a number of trade unionists. On of the most encouraging things for them was that one union leader told that his union were proposing a resolution because they wanted to show that they were concerned with those out of work as well as with those in work. There was also a public meeting, which attracted 500 people. One of those speaking was the leader of the TGWU, Jack Jones. Streather and Weir concluded that trade unionist "attitudes at the conference have shown them how necessary [a trade union officer] is" (Report of the 1972 Conference, file 7 box 65, PTA).
April 1974	Appointment of a Trades Union Liaison officer

Appendix K

K.1. CPAG Members and Staff

Professor Jonathan Bradshaw	29.4.99	Member of Executive Committee 1968- York Branch
David Bull	12.2.98/ 19.5.99	Member of Executive Committee 1967- Manchester and Bristol Branches
Rt. Hon Frank Field MP	23.11.99	Director 1969-
Tony Lynes	2.11.99	Founder members and secretary 1966-1969
Fred Phelp	25.2.99	Founder member and chair 1965-1969
Jane Streather	23.2.99	Deputy Director 1972-1975
Professor Peter Townsend	3.7.98	Founder member and chair 1969-
Professor John Veit-Wilson	30.10.98	Founder member and member of Executive Committee 1965 Tyneside Branch
Stuart Weir	1.6.99	Director of CRO 1972-

K.2. Policticans

Lord Paul Dean	22.7.00	Conservativbe MP and chair of backbench Heatlth and Social Services Committee during Labout Government. Under-Secretary of State for Social Security 1970-74
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K.3. Civil Servants

Geoffrey Beltram	4.2.99	Assictant Secretary – Statistical Division (NAB, MSS, DHSS) 1963-73
John Stacpoole	19.7.00	Assistant Prinicipal Secretary. National Insurance Division A (Family Allowances)
Robin Wendt	12.4.00	Private Secretary 1969-71

K.4. Miscellaneous

Des Wilson	6.7.99	Diretcor of Shelter and member of CPAG Executive Committee 1967-69
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